

ANTRIM AREA PLAN



1984 - 2001



*Department of the Environment
for Northern Ireland
Town & Country Planning Service*

£ 5.00

ANTRIM AREA PLAN

1984 - 2001

Department of the Environment (N.I.)
Town and Country Planning Service

Contents

SECTION I

Part 1

Part 2

Part 3

Part 4

SECTION II

SECTION III

Part 1

Paragraph Number

1.0

2.0

3.0

DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT

Page Number

INTRODUCTION

(i)

PLANNING APPEALS COMMISSION REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SENIOR PROFESSIONAL COMMISSIONER

Section 1 Objections relating to Antrim

(ii)

2 Objections relating to Randalstown

(v)

3 Objections relating to Crumlin

(vii)

4 Objections relating to Templepatrick

(vii)

5 General Objections

(vii)

6 Amendments to the Plan proposed by The Department and acceptable to The Planning Appeals Commission.

(x)

ADOPTION OF THE ANTRIM AREA PLAN

(xi)

CONCLUSION

(xi)

THE ANTRIM AREA PLAN (ADOPTION) ORDER (NORTHERN IRELAND) 1989

THE ANTRIM AREA PLAN 1984-2001 INCORPORATING CHANGES AS A RESULT OF THE PUBLIC INQUIRY AND DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT

BACKGROUND

Page Number

Introduction

1

Aims and Objectives

1

District Settlement Strategy

2

Part 2		SUBJECTS	
<i>Paragraph Number</i>			<i>Page Number</i>
4.0		Population	3
5.0		Housing	4
6.0		Employment, Industry and Tourism	5
7.0		Transportation — Airport Roads Bus Service Railways	6
8.0		Commerce	8
9.0		Education	9
10.0		Health, Social and Community Facilities	9
11.0		Open Space and Recreation	10
12.0		Conservation	10
13.0		Agriculture and Forestry	11
14.0		Extraction of Aggregates and Minerals Introduction Quarrying of Aggregates and Building Stone Extraction of Other Minerals Lignite	11
15.0		Public Utilities — Sewerage Water Supply Telecommunications Electricity Refuse Disposal Cemeteries Drainage	13
Part 3		THE TOWNS	
16.0		Antrim Town — Population Development Limit Housing Industrial Locations Unzoned Land Recreation Facilities Conservation The Central Area Community Facilities Road Proposals Public Utilities Belmont Neighbourhood Centres	15
17.0		Randalstown	21
18.0		Crumlin	23

Part 4

Paragraph Number

19.0

20.0

21.0

22.0

THE VILLAGES

Introduction

Templepatrick

Toome

Parkgate

Page Number

25

26

27

28

Part 5

THE RURAL AREA

23.0

Rural Policies — Introduction

Planning Criteria

Green Belts and Rural Policy Areas

Control of Residential Development in Green
Belts and Rural Policy Areas

Control of Residential Development in The Open
Countryside outside Green Belts and Rural
Policy Areas

Access to Rural Roads

Control of Non-Residential Development

Location, Siting and Design

29

24.0

Hamlets

34

25.0

Nutts Corner

34

REFERENCES

35

PROPOSALS MAPS

Map Number

1.

District Strategy

2

2.

Belfast International Airport

6

3.

Antrim Town

35

4.

Antrim Central Area

18

5.

Randalstown

22

6.

Crumlin

24

7.

Templepatrick

Page 26

8.

Toome

Page 27

9.

Parkgate

Page 28

10.

Rural Policies

Following Page 34

TECHNICAL SUPPLEMENT

A Technical Supplement, which sets out in more detail the quantitative basis for the main policies and proposals contained in the Area Plan, and contains descriptive material which amplifies the text and provides further justification for proposals in the Written Statement, is available from the Town and Country Planning Service, Department of the Environment (NI), County Hall, Galgorm Road, Ballymena. (Price £2.00)

SECTION I

Departmental Statement

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

ANTRIM AREA PLAN

**Statement by the Department of the Environment for
Northern Ireland following the Public Inquiry, detailing
the Department's decisions on the issues heard at the
Public Inquiry**

June 1989

ANTRIM AREA PLAN

Statement by the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Antrim Area Plan has been prepared under the provisions of Part III, of the Planning (NI) Order 1972 by the Department of the Environment (NI), covers the Council area of Antrim and extends over the period from 1984-2001.

The Department notified Antrim Borough Council of the intention to prepare the Plan by letter dated 10 May 1984, in accordance with Article 4 of the Planning Order. An initial meeting was held with the Borough Council on 5 September 1984, and this was followed by further discussions with the Council over the following 9 months. During this period consultations took place with Government Departments, statutory bodies and other interested parties. Advertisements were placed in newspapers circulating in the area in July of 1984, inviting suggestions from the general public regarding the future development of the area, and a number of letters were submitted which were considered by the Department.

- 1.2 A preliminary display of draft proposals, after advertisement in the press, took place in accordance with Article 5 of the Planning Order at the Castle Centre, Antrim from 28 January/1 February 1986; the Antrim Forum from 4/9 February 1986, and at other places throughout the local Planning Division. Representations were invited from the public; some 56 comments were received and these were considered by the Department. A further round of consultations then took place, and the Plan was finalised in the Spring of 1987.

- 1.3 In accordance with Article 6 of the Planning Order a Display of the Plan took place, after advertisement in the press, at the Castle Centre from 13/16 May 1987; at the Antrim Forum 18/22 May 1987 and at other places throughout the District. Persons were invited to formally object not later than 30 June 1987 to the Divisional Planning Office. Some 44 objections or comments were received.

- 1.4 A Public Inquiry was held in the Antrim Forum, Lough Road, Antrim on 12, 13, 14 and 15 April 1988 and was re-convened on 20 April 1988 in the Council Chamber, The Steeple, Antrim and again on 23 June 1988 in the Planning Appeals Commission Offices, Carlton House, Shaftesbury Square, Belfast. The Public Inquiry was conducted by Mr J S Turner, BA, FRTPI, ARICS, FGS, a Senior Professional Commissioner of the Planning Appeals Commission, to consider objections to the Plan. All those who objected were invited to attend and present their views. The Report of the Inquiry* and the recommendations of the Planning Appeals Commission, which have also been published and are available to the public, have been of great assistance to the Department in assessing the full weight and substance of the objections, and in the preparation of this statement.

* Antrim Area Plan : Report to the Planning Appeals Commission on a Public Inquiry on Antrim Area Plan 1984-2001 by J S Turner, BA, FRTPI, ARICS, FGS and recommendations by the Planning Appeals Commission.

2. PLANNING APPEALS COMMISSION REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SENIOR PROFESSIONAL COMMISSIONER

2.1 This Section details the decisions of the Department following consideration of the Planning Appeal Commission's recommendations on the objections which were heard at the Public Inquiry and reported on by the Senior Professional Commissioner.

**2.2 SECTION 1
OBJECTIONS RELATING TO ANTRIM**

2.2.1 Objection A — Objection to Limit of Development at Bush Road, Antrim

This objection related to the omission of a 5.7 hectare site at Bush Road from within the limit of development for Antrim. The Commission considered that there was more than sufficient land zoned for housing in Antrim, that there was a choice of land available for low density, high quality housing within the zoned areas and that the best interests of the community would be served if the objection lands remain outside the limit of development and as such be retained as part of a 'Green Wedge' of amenity land to Stiles Way.

The Department accepts the recommendation not to zone the objection site for housing and agrees that the development limit be confirmed at this location.

2.2.2 Objection B — Objection to Limit of Development at Niblock and Steeple Roads, Antrim

This objection related to the omission of some 21 hectares of land bounded by the Niblock and Steeple Roads and Holywell Burn from within the limit of development for Antrim. The Commission considered that there was adequate land for residential purposes within Antrim to allow for a variety of form, style and densities of development without the inclusion of the objection site.

The Department accepts the recommendation not to zone the objection site for housing and agrees that the development limit be confirmed at this location.

2.2.3 Objection C — Objection to Housing Zoning on 2 Sites off Ballymena Road, Antrim

This objection, from Antrim Borough Council, related to the housing designation on 2 separate sites west of Ballymena Road, Antrim, Site One being located between the former British Enkalon Factory and Ballymena Road, and Site A being located between the Railway Line and Kilbegs Road. The Borough Council argued that they be designated 'unzoned lands' or 'mixed industrial/commercial/residential use' so as to give flexibility in the eventual land use of the sites.

There are essentially two issues to be considered, viz:

- (i) the suitability of the land for housing purposes and,
- (ii) the need to identify sites for 'roof rack' trade use.

The Commission concluded that the housing zoning on Site A should not change and the Department agrees. The Residential land zoning Phase 2 in relation to Site A is therefore confirmed.

The Department also accepts the Commission's recommendation to retain some flexibility over the zoning of Site One. It therefore removes the 'Residential Land Phase 1' zoning leaving Site One as 'Unzoned Land' within the development limit.

This amendment does not rule out the possible use of all or part of the site for residential purposes.

Regarding the need to identify sites for 'roof rack' trade use, the Department has considered the compatibility of 'roof rack' outlets and the policy of consolidating all major retail uses within the town centre.

After having given detailed consideration to this issue, the Department proposes to amend the Area Plan Statement to allow more flexibility in relation to 'roof rack' trade outlets only.

The Department therefore amends paragraph 16.14 of the Area Plan Written Statement which will now read as follows;

"It is the Department's policy to consolidate the Central Area as the main shopping focus in Antrim. As a result major shopping developments outside the Central Area will be resisted as being inconsistent with this policy. The Department is aware however, that "roof-rack" type uses cannot be easily accommodated in an established town centre. If it can be clearly demonstrated to the Department, therefore, that sites suitable for these uses are not available in the Central Area, consideration will be given to locating them on unzoned land within the development limit."

This amendment refers only to 'roof rack' trade sites and does not affect the Department's policy in relation to other retail uses which will continue to be resisted outside the Central Area.

2.2.4 Objection D — Objections to the Pedestrian Priority Area Proposals, Antrim

The Department's proposal for a Pedestrian Priority Area in the centre of Antrim was the subject of a number of objections at the Public Inquiry.

The Commission, having considered all the evidence regarding the proposed Pedestrian Priority Area, accepted that such a concept would be advantageous to Antrim town centre and recommended that the Pedestrian Priority proposal be confirmed as a policy of the Area Plan.

The Department endorses this recommendation and accordingly confirms the Pedestrian Priority proposal as a policy of the Area Plan.

The Planning Appeals Commission also recommended that there should be no car parking located along the town walls south of 'The Baliwick', either within Market Square or beside Dublin Road.

The Department accepts this recommendation although it should be pointed out that the detailed design of the scheme will only emerge after further careful study and discussion with interested parties.

The Department will give high priority to progress on the detail of a scheme, which will be prepared under Articles 77-81 of the Planning (NI) Order 1972 and Article 6 of the Planning (Amendment) (NI) Order 1978.

The third recommendation of the Planning Appeals Commission report raised the issues of general environmental improvements, car parking, taxi waiting areas and servicing and their compatibility with minimising pedestrian/vehicle conflict. These matters will be addressed when considering the detailed design of the scheme which will include discussions with all interested parties.

If agreement cannot be reached a further Public Local Inquiry may be held under Article 80(3) of the Planning (NI) Order 1972.

2.2.5 Objection E — Objection to the Siting of the Antrim Civic Centre.

The objection was to the principle of zoning part of the Castle Grounds for Civic Centre use.

The Commission recommended that no action be taken on this issue as planning permission was extant for the Civic Centre on the proposed site.

The Department endorses the Commission's recommendation that no action be taken on this matter.

2.2.6 Objection F — Castle Junction, Antrim

The objectors argued that a roundabout should be provided at the Church Street/ Castle Way junction.

The Commission considered that the installation of a roundabout at this junction would not have any material effect on the deflection, or otherwise, of traffic entering Church Street.

The Department endorses the Commission's recommendation that no change be made at this junction.

2.2.7 Objection G — Station Road/Railway Street, Antrim

The objectors argued that the Station Road/Railway Street Link be re-opened.

The Commission considered that, while having considerable sympathy with the views expressed by the objectors, on balance the Station Road/Railway Street Link should not be re-opened.

The Department endorses the Commission's recommendation that no change be made at this junction.

2.3 **SECTION 2**
OBJECTIONS RELATING TO RANDALSTOWN

2.3.1 **Objection H — Lands off Castle Road, Randalstown**

The Appointed Commissioner considered that there were 2 issues to be considered in this objection. Firstly the extension to the development limit and secondly the re-zoning of land.

In relation to the extension to the development limit the Planning Appeals Commission, while noting the objectors' arguments for extending the limit, came to the view that there was no need to increase the amount of land zoned for residential use in Randalstown.

The Department agrees, and accordingly confirms the Development Limit.

In relation to the re-zoning of land the Planning Appeals Commission recommended that the industrial zoning notation be removed to increase the flexibility of the use of the land.

The Department agrees and accordingly the site has been shown as "unzoned" land.

The definition of unzoned land is outlined in Paragraph 17.7 of the Area Plan Written Statement.

2.3.2 **Objection I — Site for Church at Church Road, Randalstown**

The objectors argued that the limit of development at Church Road, Randalstown be amended to incorporate a site for a Church, Graveyard and Manse. The Department did not contest the objection but there were counter objections from local residents.

The Commission considered that the main point raised in the objection lay in the appropriateness of the published development limit for Randalstown in the Written Statement. The Commission came to the view that the amendment to the development limit as suggested by the Church (and not contested by the Department) should **not** be allowed.

The Department has given careful consideration to the issues raised by this objection and cannot accept the Commission's recommendation. The Department takes the view that the preparation of an Area Plan is the correct time to review limits of development and accommodate appropriate uses inside urban areas. As a result it did not contest this objection at the Public Inquiry as it felt that in the absence of a suitable alternative site inside the proposed development limit, the church and related uses on the objection site would be acceptable in planning terms.

The Department therefore, amends the development limit to incorporate the objection site which is zoned for "church and related uses".

2.3.3 Objection J — Moore's Entry, Randalstown

The Department's proposal to construct a car park on Moore's Entry and confine the existing bridge to pedestrian access was the subject of a number of objections at the Public Inquiry.

The Commission considered that there were two issues to be considered in relation to Moore's Entry;

- (a) The extent to which commercial development and car parking in Randalstown centre needed to be increased, and,
- (b) Whether a vehicular access over the bridge at Moore's Entry needed to be retained.

The Department has carefully considered the recommendations made in relation to these issues and has come to the following conclusions;

- (1) **The Department accepts the recommendation that paragraph 17.9 of the Area Plan be confirmed in relation to commercial development in Randalstown.** *[Paragraph 17.9 of the Antrim Area Plan states 'A town centre area has been defined. Planning policy will be to encourage shopping, commercial and entertainment/recreation uses here and to discourage such developments elsewhere in the town.']*

Any proposals for shopping will therefore be considered by the Department in the context of the Area Plan.

- (2) In relation to vehicular access over the bridge, the Commission came to the view and recommended to the Department that Moore's Entry remain a through route for vehicles and pedestrians on a shared basis over the existing bridge.
The Department accepts this recommendation on the basis that Moore's Entry remains a private road.

If the Department is required to adopt and maintain Moore's Entry as part of the public highway, the road, including the bridge, will have to be constructed to proper adoption standards.

- (3) **The Department is of the opinion that the use of Moore's Entry as a through route is incompatible with its use as a car park and accordingly drops its proposal to construct a car park at Moore's Entry while it remains open to through traffic.**

- (4) **Paragraph 17.11 of the Area Plan is deleted as it no longer applies.**

[Paragraph 17.11 of the Antrim Area Plan stated 'Moore's Entry has been the subject of many meetings and discussions between the Department and Public Representatives over the years. After further careful consideration the Department proposes the construction of a car park on the site, Moore's Entry not being a through route, and the existing bridge confined to pedestrian access.']

2.4 **SECTION 3**
OBJECTIONS RELATING TO CRUMLIN

2.4.1 **Objection K — Objection to Development Lands at Ballydonaghy and Ballytromery Roads, Crumlin**

The Commission considered that the objections raised the issues of the extent of land zoned for Crumlin, the effect of the Airport on development and the effect of development on a fish farm.

The Commission, having considered the evidence, recommended to the Department that no change be made to the proposals for Crumlin. The Department concurs.

2.5 **SECTION 4**
OBJECTIONS RELATING TO TEMPLEPATRICK

2.5.1 **Objection L — Objection to Limit of Development at Lylehill Road and to the Rear of Bridge Park, Templepatrick**

The 2 objections referred to different but adjoining areas of land.

The Commission came to the view that there was sufficient land shown for development in Templepatrick and supported the Area Plan Policy for limited growth. The Department concurs with the Commission's view that the non-availability of land to a particular developer at this time is not considered to be adequate justification for increasing the amount of land inside the development limit.

The Department endorses the Commission's recommendation that no change be made to the development limit at Templepatrick.

2.6 **SECTION 5**
GENERAL OBJECTIONS

2.6.1 **Objection M — Objection by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds**
Owing to the detailed and wide ranging nature of the issues raised by this objection this statement should be read in conjunction with the report of the Appointed Commissioner on the Public Inquiry and the report of the Planning Appeals Commission.

The objection referred to matters relating to Nature Conservation and the Commission have made a number of detailed recommendations.

In the light of its commitment to Nature Conservation, the Department has carefully considered these recommendations and broadly accepts them. The following alterations are being incorporated into the Plan.

- a) **New Paragraph 12.4:—**
"The conservation and enhancement of the natural environment will be encouraged and promoted. Areas of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves and Nature Reserves will be protected and development likely to affect adversely such areas will not normally be permitted. Development which would adversely affect other defined areas of nature conservation importance would not normally be permitted."
- b) **The following criterion is added to paragraph 23.3:—**
"The need to protect the wildlife interest of the countryside, in ASSIs in particular."
- c) **New Paragraph 12.5:—**
"The need to protect wildlife interests will be taken into account when considering development proposals in the District's towns and villages."
- d) **The Planning Appeals Commission recommended that the Department consider a number of issues raised in paragraphs 7.3.11 and 7.3.12 of the Commissioner's report.**

The Department has fully considered the issues and amends the Area Plan Written Statement as follows:—

Paragraph 5.10

During the Plan period the Department will encourage an orderly growth in the residential sectors of each settlement. Particular attention will be given to environmental considerations and to design details concerning the size, siting and layout of proposed residential developments. The Department will look sympathetically on higher density residential developments within the town centres of Antrim, Randalstown and Crumlin. When determining suitable densities for development account will be taken of the densities of adjoining developments. Over a given area a grading of densities is to be preferred to a sudden increase.

Paragraph 6.3 (*continued*)

Attention will be given to environmental considerations and Areas of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves and Nature Reserves will be protected. Development likely to affect adversely such areas will not normally be permitted.

Paragraph 6.6

- (i) **encourage the development of tourist facilities in the area while conserving and enhancing the quality of the natural landscape and protecting wildlife habitats.**

Paragraph 8.5

Retailing and commercial activity will be strongly resisted in the open countryside as these uses are better located within existing built-up areas, both to serve the local community and to conserve landscape and wildlife habitats.

Paragraph 11.3

An additional major open space resource is Lough Neagh. Shane's Castle, with its Royal Society for the Protection of Birds managed nature reserve, is an important recreation feature in the District.

As the Department accepts its responsibilities for Nature Conservation it takes the view that the other changes suggested in paragraph 7.3.11 and those suggested in 7.3.12 are unnecessary.

- e) **The Department accepts the recommendation that the Rural Policies Map (Proposals Map No 10) be re-drawn to remove any ambiguity over the extent of the three policy areas. The Lough Shore Policy Area replaces the Antrim Green Belt along the Lough shore and is extended in the south to overlap with the Lignite Policy Area. As a result a dual policy operates along that part of the Lough shore inside the Lignite Policy Area.**

The Lough Shore Policy Area therefore extends along the complete Lough shore. It extends 100 metres east of the shore road and 200 metres from the shoreline where there is no road. The Lignite Policy Area overlaps with the Lough Shore Policy Area in the south of the district and is required to protect the regionally significant lignite deposits south west of Crumlin.

- f) **Paragraph 12.1 of the Antrim Area Plan Written statement is amended to read:—**

"Lough Neagh and Lough Beg are the most important areas for nature conservation, having numbers of rare and interesting plant and animal species together with large numbers of breeding, migrant, and wintering birds. The U.K. Government is a signatory to European Community Directive 79/409 on the conservation of wild birds. Both loughs are regarded as being of international importance and have been notified as Areas of Scientific Interest and declared jointly as a Ramsar site. The "Ramsar Convention" is an international treaty on "Wetlands of International Importance especially Waterfowl Habitats" which was adopted at Ramsar, Iran on 2 February 1971. This convention imposes a number of specific responsibilities and obligations on the Government and was ratified by the U.K. Government in 1976. Sandy Braes is also an Area of Scientific Interest. National Nature Reserves have been declared at Farr's Bay, Lough Neagh Islands, Rea's Wood and that part of Randalstown Forest along the Lough Shore. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has a managed reserve at Shane's Castle."

2.6.2 Objection N — Objections to the Green Belt

The majority of objections related to the extent of the Green Belt in the rural area between Antrim and Randalstown.

The Commission found that the Green Belt in this general area was well founded and that a blanket withdrawal of the Green Belt designation would be against good planning practice.

The Department concurs, and endorses the recommendation that no change be made in the Green Belt designation.

2.6.3 **Objection O — Kirby Lane Road Link**

The objection questioned the justification for the proposed Link Road and suggested there were better alternative routes. The Commission recommended that this matter, including the suggested alternative routes, be the subject of further detailed study.

The Department has however, over the past years, examined in great detail all the routes proposed by the objectors and the Commissioner and, after careful and lengthy considerations, concluded that the best line is the Kirby Lane Link Road.

The Department therefore confirms the Kirby Lane road link.

2.7 **SECTION 6**

2.7.1 **AMENDMENTS TO THE PLAN PROPOSED BY THE DEPARTMENT AND ACCEPTABLE TO THE PLANNING APPEALS COMMISSION**

Prior to the Public Inquiry the Department considered all objections and felt able to meet or partly meet a number of objections.

The Commission has accepted the following amendments to the plan and the Department now confirms the following changes and incorporates them into the Plan:

- (i) Unzoned land inside the development limit south-west of Ballygrooby Crescent, Randalstown, has been zoned as "Development Land Primarily Residential".
- (ii) Zoning of the site opposite the main entrance to Belfast International Airport has been changed from "Proposed Hotel Site" to "Proposed Airport-Related Use".
- (iii) A field to the east of Ballytromery Road, Crumlin, has been included within the development limit and zoned as "Development Land Primarily Residential".
- (iv) The industrial zoning on the 2 fields to the west of Beech Mount, Randalstown, has been removed and the land left as "unzoned land" inside the development limit.
- (v) Unzoned land to the west of the sewage disposal works in Crumlin has been zoned as "Development Land Primarily Residential".
- (vi) A proposed footpath is indicated from Church Street, Antrim, to the Railway Street car park across the development sites at Nos. 1/19 Church Street, Antrim.
- (vii) A parcel of land between the northern boundary of the Airport and British Road has been zoned for "Proposed Airport-Related Use". An additional area at this location has been shown for a "Proposed Extension to Belfast International Airport".
- (viii) Land on the east side of Crumlin Road, Crumlin, has been included within the development limit and left as "unzoned land".

3. ADOPTION OF THE ANTRIM AREA PLAN

- 3.1 The purpose of the Plan is to advise the public of the broad planning considerations by which development in the Antrim Area will be guided. It deals with main land use and development issues only. Matters of detail will be resolved through the operation of the statutory development control process and the preparation of local planning studies where necessary.
- 3.2 The Area Plan provides a broad framework within which development can take place while at the same time ensuring that the environment of the Antrim Area is protected.
Future local or subject studies, such as the Pedestrian Priority Scheme in Antrim Town Centre, will provide a greater detail of proposed development.
- In the Area Plan two development phases for residential land have been introduced. This phasing has been designed to ensure that the town grows in an orderly and compact fashion with the sites close to the town being developed first. The Plan goes on to state (Paragraph 16.4) that second phase sites will only become available post 1996. The Department will therefore monitor residential development in Antrim and may seek to defer the second phase start date (1996) if the first phase development land is not significantly taken up by 1996. **This may entail an amendment to the plan pre 1996 but where major alterations are proposed these will be made available for public scrutiny in accordance with the provisions of Part III of the Planning (NI) Order 1972.**
- 3.3 While expressing reservations on some aspects of the Plan Proposals, the Planning Appeals Commission commended the overall Plan to the community of the Antrim Area as providing a framework for future development and expressed the hope that it would receive broad public support.
- 3.4 **The Department now adopts the Antrim Area Plan and the associated proposals maps 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 as amended by this Statement as the Development Plan for the Antrim Area under Article 7 of the Planning (NI) Order 1972.**
- 3.5 **A copy of the Order adopting the Antrim Area Plan as a Development Plan under Article 7 of Part III of the Planning (NI) Order 1972 is reproduced as Section II to this publication.**
- 3.6 **The Antrim Area Plan (1984-2001) as modified by this statement forms Section III of this publication.**

4. CONCLUSION

The Department wishes to thank all those members of the public and elected representatives who contributed to the decision making process. In particular the Department would extend its gratitude to Mr John Turner who conducted the Inquiry. His comprehensive and detailed report has been of great assistance to the Department in its consideration of the objections.

SECTION II

The Antrim Area Plan (Adoption) Order (Northern Ireland) 1989

THE PLANNING (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1972
THE PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT PLAN)
REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 1973
THE ANTRIM AREA PLAN (ADOPTION) ORDER
(NORTHERN IRELAND) 1989

Made 5th June 1989

Coming into operation 21st June 1989

WHEREAS the Department in pursuance of the provisions of Part III of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1972^(a) (hereinafter referred to as "the Order") and the Planning (Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1973^(b) after consultation with Antrim Borough Council, prepared a Development Plan (hereinafter called "the Plan") for the said Council area;

AND WHEREAS copies of the Plan were made available for inspection and objections having been duly made within the time stated for making objections, the Department called a Public Local Inquiry to be held by the Planning Appeals Commission in April and June 1988 for the purpose of considering such objections;

AND WHEREAS the Department has considered the said objections and the report of the Planning Appeals Commission on the said Inquiry;

NOW THEREFORE the Department in exercise of the powers conferred by Article 7(2) of the Order and all other powers enabling it in that behalf hereby orders as follows:—

1. This Order may be cited as the Antrim Area Plan (Adoption) Order (Northern Ireland) 1989 and shall come into operation on 21st June 1989.
2. (1) The Plan is hereby adopted as a Development Plan to the extent approved and endorsed in the statement entitled "Antrim Area Plan, Statement by Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland".

(2) The Plan together with the said Statement shall be known as the Antrim Area Plan and shall come into operation on 21st June 1989.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department of the Environment (NI) on 5th June 1989.

Douglas B McIlldoon
Assistant Secretary

(a) S.I. 1972 1634 (N.I. 17)

(b) S.R. & O. (N.I.) 1973 No. 265

SECTION III

**The Antrim Area Plan 1984 - 2001
incorporating changes as a result of
The Public Inquiry and
Departmental Statement**

Part 1

*P***A***R*KGATE

*RA***N***DALSTOWN*

*AN***T***RIM*

*TEMPLEPAT***R***ICK*

*CRUML***I***N*

*TOO***M***E*

AREA PLAN

1984 - 2001

Background

Introduction

1.0

1.1 An outline plan entitled Antrim New Town was published in 1965. This plan dealt with Antrim Town only. In 1966 Antrim District was designated a New Town under the New Towns (Northern Ireland) Act 1965. A year later the New Town area was enlarged to include both Antrim and Ballymena. On the re-organisation of Local Government in 1973 the Antrim and Ballymena New Town Commission, set up under the Act, was disbanded. However the designation of the Antrim and Ballymena area as a New Town still remains.

1.2 On 10 May 1984 notice was given to Antrim Borough Council under Article 4 of the Planning (NI) Order 1972 that the Department intended to prepare an Antrim Area Plan extending to the whole of Antrim Borough and covering the period up to 2001.

1.3 On 5 and 11 July 1984 Notice of Intention to prepare the Area Plan was published in the local press and suggestions for the future development of the area were invited from the public. Following these announcements the Department undertook a range of surveys and analyses and had consultations with Antrim Borough Council, Government Departments, statutory undertakers, and other appropriate authorities. In the light of these studies, a first Statement and maps were completed.

1.4 A public display of these draft preliminary proposals, based on this Statement, was mounted to ensure that adequate publicity was given to them as required by Article 5 of the Planning Order. Persons wishing to make representations to the Department regarding the proposals were given the opportunity to do so. The representations so made were considered by the Department following the display and further consultations with appropriate authorities took place.

1.5 In accordance with Article 6 of the Planning Order a Display of the Plan was held, after advertisement in the press, in May 1987. Persons were invited to formally object to the Department not later than 30th June 1987. Some 44 objections or comments were received.

1.6 A Public Inquiry was held in the Antrim Forum and the Council Chamber, the Steeple, Antrim in April 1988 and was reconvened on 23rd June 1988 in the Planning Appeals Commission Offices, Belfast. The Public Inquiry was conducted by Mr. J.S. Turner, BA, FRTPI, ARICS, FGS, a Senior Professional Commissioner of the Planning Appeals Commission, to consider objections to the Plan. All those who objected were invited to attend and present their views. The report of the Public Inquiry and the recommendations of the Planning Appeals Commission, have also been published and are available to the public.

1.7 Changes made to the Area Plan as a result of the Departmental Statement following the Public Inquiry have been incorporated into this publication.

Aims and Objectives

2.0

2.1 The Area Plan sets out the Department's proposals for the future development of Antrim Borough over the Plan period.

2.2 The proposals indicate the range of development opportunities which exist in the area while taking account of likely future population changes. They seek to show adequate and suitable sites or locations for the many land requirements of housing, industry, commerce, education, social and community facilities. Account is also taken of the various public utility requirements. A generally pleasant physical environment is aimed for. Urban development needs will be met inside the development limits which are drawn around the various towns and villages. This will ensure, on the one hand, that adequate

**District Settlement
Strategy
(Maps Nos 1 and 10)
3.0**

land for all of these purposes is included, and on the other that such urban developments do not sprawl unnecessarily into open country beyond.

2.3 Town centre boundaries have been defined within the towns, and commercial and entertainment uses will generally be required to be sited within them. This will add to the vitality of such centres and also help to protect residential areas outside them from intrusive commercial uses.

2.4 The Department aims to restrict the spread of scattered residential development in the open countryside beyond the development limits of the towns and villages. In particular, strict policies will apply to residential development in the Green Belts immediately adjoining the towns, and in Policy Areas.

2.5 Conservation forms an important element in the Plan. This extends from the protection of natural landscapes and wild life, to the protection of archaeological sites and buildings of special architectural and historic interest.

2.6 The protection and development of the International Airport, its associated uses and environs, are important elements in the Plan.

2.7 The Department aims to protect the proven reserves of lignite and of any mineral of outstanding importance by limiting surface developments which would prejudice the recovery of those reserves, and seeks to ensure their working with the minimum of environmental disturbance.

2.8 The Department aims to improve and protect the existing transportation network.

3.1 In line with Regional policy¹ the District Strategy proposes that Antrim, the District Town will form the major focus for growth over the Plan period.

3.2 Randalstown and Crumlin, the next two settlements in order of importance, are designated as local towns.

3.3 The third tier of settlements comprises the villages of Templepatrick, Toome and Parkgate. Village maps have been prepared for them, but to facilitate flexibility, these maps do not zone land for particular purposes.

3.4 In the open countryside the Department's policy distinguishes areas of tighter control of residential development (Green Belts and Policy Areas) from the remainder of the rural area. In the Green Belts three hamlets have been identified to allow for limited residential infilling and rounding off. These are Dunadry, Milltown (Randalstown) and Groggan. In the remaining rural area the policy of permitting individual dwellings unless there are specific planning objections, allows adequate development opportunities without the selection of specific hamlets.

Part 2

*P***A***R*KGATE

*RA***N***DALSTOWN*

*AN***T***RIM*

*TEMPLEPAT***R***ICK*

*CRUML***I***N*

*TOO***M***E*

AREA PLAN

1984 - 2001

Subjects

Population

4.0

4.1 The population of Antrim District increased from 34,000 persons in 1971 to 45,900 persons in 1984 with the greater part of this growth experienced in the early to mid-1970's. In the same period the main urban settlements (Antrim, Randalstown and Crumlin) have increased their share of the Plan area population from 19,000 persons (56%) in 1971 to 31,100 persons (68%) in 1984. In 1984, 56% of the total population lived in the District Town of Antrim itself.

4.2 The population of the villages and rural portion of the Plan area is estimated to have fallen from approximately 15,000 (44% of the 1971 total) to 14,400 (31% of the 1984 total). Virtually all this change in the urban/rural ratio took place in the early to mid-1970's.

4.3 The most dramatic changes in population have occurred in Antrim Town. First came the stimulus of direct Government action by the establishment of the New Town Commission, with the population growing from 7,500 persons in 1966 to approximately 24,000 persons in 1977. Secondly came the virtual cessation of growth between 1977 and 1984. The population in 1984 was 25,600 persons, only 1,600 persons greater than seven years before, and the migration factor changed from one of high in-migration to a nett outward flow.

4.4 Population projections include assumptions about future natural increase rates and migration patterns. These inevitably cannot be precise and are used only as an approximate aid in plan making. To minimise this the Antrim Area Plan will be monitored and population projections revised as necessary, to ensure continuing relevance throughout the life of the Plan.

4.5 Antrim Town should remain the main centre of population growth. While the projections suggest a much smaller growth of population (up to 2,600 additional persons) than in the pre 1984 period, the residential zoning allocations are substantially in excess of the population figures. This is in order to mitigate against the effects of any sudden unforeseen return to the high growth rates and fluctuations of the early 1970's (See paragraphs 16.3 and 16.4).

4.6 Significant growth is expected in Crumlin during the Plan period due to easy access to Belfast and its close proximity to the proposed lignite opencast mining site. Crumlin's population could reach 3,800 persons by 2001. Randalstown is expected to grow steadily and could reach a population of 4,300 persons by 2001.

4.7 The population share of the District remainder could fall slightly due to the degree of development concentration in the larger settlements, but the actual population in this section is still expected to grow slowly to approximately 16,000 persons by 2001.

4.8 The following table summarises the position.

TABLE 1
PROJECTED TOTAL POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

	1984	1991	1996	2001
Antrim	25,600	25,500	26,800	28,200
Randalstown	3,500	3,700	4,000	4,300
Crumlin	2,400	3,000	3,400	3,800
District Remainder	14,400	15,600	15,800	16,000
TOTAL	*45,900	47,800	50,000	52,300

(* Registrar General's Mid Year Estimate)

Housing

5.0

5.1 The number of dwellings in Antrim district increased from 9,100 in 1971 to 13,700 in 1984. The greater part of this growth took place in Antrim Town where the number of dwellings nearly doubled from 4,100 in 1971 to 7,900 in 1984. In the same period the housing stock increased in Randalstown from 850 to nearly 1,100 and in Crumlin from 400 to 650.

5.2 Antrim Town's growth in housing stock was primarily due to the public sector developments of the early and mid-1970's when 2,750 such dwellings were completed in the years between 1971 and 1977. As a result Antrim Town's housing stock in 1984 was 80% public authority and 20% private sector accommodation. In both Randalstown and Crumlin this housing stock ratio is very similar to that of the overall District itself ie 50% public authority and 50% private sector accommodation.

5.3 In general the existing housing stock within the District is of a high quality in terms of fitness for habitation. In Antrim Town most of the dwellings are relatively new.

5.4 Over the Plan period additional housing will be required to accommodate new households and to allow for the trend towards a smaller average household size (ie the number of persons per household) which is expected to continue decreasing during the Plan period. Other factors to be taken into consideration are the needs to replace existing unfit dwellings and dwellings likely to become unfit, to accommodate existing households currently involuntarily sharing dwellings, and to allow for a continuous pool of vacant dwellings to meet the demand for families moving from one house to another.

5.5 Projected figures for such future housing need in the Plan area are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
PROJECTED HOUSING NEED

	Dwelling Stock at 1984	Additional Dwellings Needed by 2001
Antrim Town	7,900	+1,800
Randalstown	1,100	+450
Crumlin	650	+700
District Remainder	4,050	+950
TOTAL	13,700	+3,900

(1984 figures are from Departmental House Counts based on the settlements' development limits and from the Rating and Valuation Office records.)

5.6 By the end of the Plan period up to 3,900 additional dwellings might be required in Antrim District. Some 1,800 of these might be needed in Antrim Town where it is anticipated that such housing need would mostly be met by private sector development. This to some degree would help to redress the existing housing imbalance in the public to private ratio.

5.7 In Randalstown up to 450 new dwellings might be required by 2001 while the corresponding number of new dwellings needed in Crumlin by this date might be 700.

5.8 The need for up to 950 dwellings by 2001 could be expected in the remainder of the District, including development on sites in the smaller settlements.

5.9 Sufficient land has been identified inside the development limit of each settlement both to accommodate these levels of residential development, and to allow adequate flexibility in the bringing forward of land for development.

Employment, Industry and Tourism 6.0

5.10 During the Plan period the Department will encourage an orderly growth in the residential sectors of each settlement. Particular attention will be given to environmental considerations and to design details concerning the size, siting and layout of proposed residential developments. The Department will look sympathetically on higher density residential developments within the town centres of Antrim, Randalstown and Crumlin. When determining suitable densities for development account will be taken of the densities of adjoining developments. Over a given area a grading of densities is to be preferred to a sudden increase.

6.1 The main centre for employment and industry in the Antrim Area Plan will be Antrim Town. This is reflected in the number of existing industries and the amount of land zoned for industrial purposes. Large-scale industry will be encouraged to locate in sites designated within the urban area. There is an adequate supply of land for such purposes.

6.2 In all settlements appropriate small scale industrial uses will be welcomed on suitable sites. Generally, the Department's policy will be to react to demand as it arises, rather than to apply a rigid zoning policy.

6.3 In rural areas permission will normally be given for small scale commercial and industrial activities in existing buildings such as disused agricultural or commercial buildings or on derelict sites, provided there are no objections such as unsightliness, noise, smell and excessive or dangerous traffic generation. Attention will be given to environmental considerations and Areas of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves and Nature Reserves will be protected. Development likely to affect adversely such areas will not normally be permitted.

6.4 There are several features of tourist interest in the District including Shane's Castle and railway, the Lough Neagh water system, Randalstown and Tardree Forests, the Riverside Conservation Area and Castle Upton.

6.5 There is potential for future development of tourism in the Antrim District. This will be dependent on several factors — the development of the Lough Neagh water system, especially for specialist cruising and sailing; catering more specifically for short-stay visitors generated by the Province's International Airport; developing the area's appeal for conference traffic because of its focal transport position; and providing accommodation in the farm and country house sector.

6.6 The Department aims to:—

- (i) encourage the development of tourist facilities in the area while conserving and enhancing the quality of the natural landscape and protecting wildlife habitats.
- (ii) facilitate an increase in accommodation available in the District provided it is compatible in terms of location, type and scale.

To achieve these aims the Department is dependent upon the response of statutory bodies, other agencies and private enterprise.

AIRPORT (Map No 2)

- 7.1 Belfast International Airport is a major land use within the Antrim District, is a significant employer, and generates substantial traffic movements.
- 7.2 The final phase of the Airport's Stage III development started in December 1986. This involved improvement of the domestic facilities and the re-development of the east wing of the terminal building to provide an executive aviation terminal for private aircraft and conference facilities. Development of the international facilities commenced in January 1987. An area of 4.5 hectares (11 acres) on the south side of British Road has been reserved to facilitate the development of airport cargo facilities. There may be drainage difficulties requiring expenditure by the developer on this site.
- 7.3 An area of approximately 29 hectares (72 acres) to the west and north of the main runway has been designated for development as a Free Zone. (A Free Zone is an enclosed area attached to an airport or seaport, treated for customs duty purposes as if it was outside the territory of its host country. Incoming goods suffer no customs duty, VAT or other tariff on importation)⁽²⁾. Several types of business are envisaged eg warehousing and industry. The area has been fenced and secured for customs purposes, and access to it is from the existing public roads serving the Airport.
- 7.4 The Department will continue to permit limited development on the north side of the A26, west of the main Airport entrance, for uses related to, and dependent on siting close to, Belfast International Airport. Approximately 17 hectares (42 acres) of land, with access located west of the main Airport entrance, have been zoned and tie in with existing uses at this location. A further 11 hectares (27.5 acres) between the Airport boundary and British Road has a similar zoning. There may be drainage difficulties requiring expenditure by the developer on this site. An additional site, opposite the main Airport entrance, is also zoned for uses related to, and dependent on siting close to the airport, subject to restricted traffic generation.
- 7.5 With the continued expansion of Belfast International Airport there is increasing potential for an Airport hotel development. NI Airports Limited propose to provide hotel facilities within the Airport perimeter.
- 7.6 The existing runways have sufficient capacity and length to cater for present air traffic movements. NI Airports Limited estimate, however, that by 1990—1995 an additional 410 metres will be required at each end of the main east/west runway. Should the 410 metre extension at the western end of the runway go ahead, it could require the diversion of the railway line. NI Airports will liaise closely with NI Railways regarding any development that affects the railway.
- 7.7 When exercising its development control function on sites close to the Airport the Department will assess planning applications on their merits in relation to the following:—
- (i) **Height Safeguarding** — Around Belfast International Airport, within a safeguarded area which extends for several miles from the Airport boundary, the Department consults the Civil Aviation Authority about applications for planning permission for development involving buildings and structures the height of which would exceed various specified limits. This is to ensure that precision instrument approaches are not adversely affected and that aircraft flights are not endangered, in the interests of public safety.

(ii) **Noise** — Noise generated by aircraft flying to and from the Airport is a potential source of annoyance and the Department will take this into account when considering applications for planning permission to develop sites near the Airport. An exercise to predict future noise levels at Aldergrove for the year 1990 was carried out for the Department by the Civil Aviation Authority. Noise and Number Index (NNI) contours were calculated using a complex formula which takes account of estimated growth in traffic, assumptions about the types of aircraft in use, and aircraft flight paths. Based on the NNI contours, two areas have been defined:—

Area A (See Map No 2) — the noisier zone, which approximates to 50 NNI and above, where planning permission for new residential and other noise sensitive development will not be granted by reason of aircraft noise disturbance.

Area B (See Map No 2) — the zone between 40 and 50 NNI. When planning permission is granted for new residential and other noise sensitive developments which are in accordance with Area Plan policies, the Department will inform prospective developers that the site is subject to aircraft noise levels which may cause annoyance and will recommend that occupied dwellings should be sound insulated.

The policies and areas may be reviewed during the Plan period to take account of future developments in runway extensions, aircraft engine technology and potential refinement of the techniques by which the likely disturbance from aircraft noise can be predicted.

(iii) **Public Safety Zones** — There are areas at the ends of the main east/west runway within which the Department restricts development in order to protect third parties on the ground from possible aircraft accidents. These areas apply to the existing runway and also the proposed runway extensions.

Within the Public Safety Zones the Department's policy is to prevent development which would significantly increase the population working, living or congregating in the area. This policy is most restrictive in the first 710 metres from the end of the runway (this takes account of the proposed runway extensions) as this is the area where there is a concentration of risk. Virtually no development will be allowed here. In the "outer" area, from 710 metres outwards, the Department may permit limited expansions of existing buildings, but refuse applications for entirely new developments.

ROADS (Map No 1)

7.8 The Department has identified a main road network for the Plan area. The principal roads which cross the District, the M2, M22, A6, A26, A52, A57 and B101 have been designated as "main routes for protection" by the Department. Access to, and development along these roads is strictly controlled to preserve the safety and convenience of traffic, and for amenity reasons.

7.9 During the Plan period the following road schemes are envisaged for the area:—

- (i) A26 Antrim/Ballymena dual carriageway from Dunsilly to Ballymena.
- (ii) Kirby Lane Link from Dublin Road to Abbey Cross; B101/A57 Oldstone Road improvement from Airport Road to Abbey Cross; and A26 Killead by-pass. These schemes will provide an improved link from Antrim town and the north to the airport and the south.

Commerce 8.0

- (iii) M2 (Crosskennan) slip roads to the Antrim Area Hospital.
- (iv) Lignite road near Crumlin to provide direct access to the lignite field.
- (v) A6 Toome re-alignment in Toome village.

Development Control will be exercised to protect these future routes within approximately 100 metres of either side of the proposed roadline.

New road construction, re-alignment and improvement of sections of the existing network will be carried out when justified and when financial resources allow.

BUS SERVICE

7.10 Ulsterbus provides road passenger transport throughout the District and within the town itself. There are bus depots/stations at Station Road, Antrim and at the east end of Main Street, Crumlin, (both adjacent to Railway Stations on the main Ballymena-Lisburn line). Bus frequencies vary seasonally and the most frequented routes are from Antrim to Belfast via Templepatrick on the A6, from Antrim to Ballymena on the A26, and from Antrim to Randalstown on the A6.

RAILWAYS

7.11 Northern Ireland Railways is at present considering several rail proposals in the Antrim District. These include the possible provision of rail sidings at Antrim for the transfer of containerised household waste, development of a rail siding at the Crumlin lignite site to provide rail trunk haul facilities for the movement of raw or processed lignite, provision of a direct rail link to Belfast International Airport, and development of surplus land at Antrim station. These proposals are at discussion stage and there is no commitment by Northern Ireland Railways for the ultimate provision of all or any of them.

8.1 Antrim Town is the District's principal shopping town and since the opening of the new Castle Centre it has continued to increase its sphere of influence within the District. Demands for additional floorspace will be generated by the expected increase in the District's population and by any increase in the area's per capita expenditure. However, the existing shopping catchment of Antrim Town is unlikely to change significantly within the Plan period as other centres such as Ballymena, Lisburn and primarily Belfast, will continue to act as strong shopping magnets. Randalstown and Crumlin will continue to cater for the shopping needs of their hinterlands.

8.2 Town centre limits have been identified in Antrim, Randalstown and Crumlin and it is considered that future shopping floorspace needs can be met within them. It is the Department's policy to strengthen the dominance of these central areas by concentrating future commercial developments here. Major commercial development will therefore be discouraged outside these areas, although some small-scale corner shop type units will continue to be acceptable where appropriate.

8.3 In addition to being shopping and office centres, the central areas of Antrim, Randalstown and Crumlin should also be seen as the entertainment and social centres of the towns. Restaurants, snooker rooms, pubs etc will be considered sympathetically in these zones, though it is hoped a mix of residential and commercial development can continue in them.

Education 9.0

8.4 Proposals for commercial uses within the villages of Templepatrick, Toome and Parkgate will be acceptable if they are in keeping with the existing village character.

8.5 Retailing and commercial activity will be strongly resisted in the open countryside as these uses are better located within existing built-up areas, both to serve the local community and to conserve landscape and wildlife habitats.

9.1 The responsibility for educational facilities within the Antrim District lies with:—

- (i) the North Eastern Education and Library Board, which is responsible for Controlled Schools, and
- (ii) Voluntary School Authorities, which are responsible for Maintained Schools.

9.2 Within the District there are 19 Controlled Primary Schools and 10 Maintained Primary Schools. In general Primary School enrolments increased significantly between 1975 and 1979 and then declined quite sharply, particularly in the Controlled sector, between 1979 and 1984. As spare capacity exists in most Primary Schools there are no proposals to build new schools. Any increase in demand will be met by an extension to the existing facilities.

9.3 Within the Secondary education sector there are six Controlled Schools and two Maintained Schools. In Antrim, Ardnavagh Controlled School was opened in 1979 and St Malachy's Maintained School in 1975. These are situated on adjoining sites north of Stiles Way. Randalstown has both a Controlled and a Maintained Secondary School, while Crumlin has a Controlled Secondary School. In general Secondary School enrolments have increased steadily since 1975, but this growth is unlikely to be sustained, as a result of falling Primary School enrolments.

9.4 The Technical College in Antrim serves the District and offers a variety of academic and vocational courses.

9.5 In Antrim a Controlled Nursery School is situated at the Steeple, a Maintained Nursery School at Greystone Road, and a proposal for a Maintained Nursery School at Oriel Road has been approved in principle.

Health, Social and Community Facilities 10.0

10.1 The Northern Health and Social Services Board is responsible for Health and Personal Social Services within the Antrim District. A general hospital is located at Massereene, Station Road, Antrim, a psychiatric hospital at Holywell, Steeple Road, Antrim and a Special Care hospital under the control of the Eastern Health and Social Services Board, is located at Muckamore. There are two Health Centres in the District at Station Road, Antrim and at Neillsbrook, Randalstown. Various clinics are held within these centres and at other locations throughout the District. A wider range of facilities, ranging from a Day Centre to Homes for the Elderly also exist within the District.

10.2 The main development in relation to health facilities in the Antrim Area is the proposal to provide by 1992 a new Area Hospital off Bush Road, containing 313 beds. On the same complex, the Northern Area College of Nursing opened in 1983 and the residential accommodation for trainee nurses has been occupied since September 1985. Final planning of an Area Laboratory on the site has been delayed pending the outcome of a Board Working Party on laboratory services for the whole of the Area. With this exception, no major new sites are likely to be required for health facilities within the Plan period.

Open Space and Recreation 11.0

10.3 There are five branch libraries and one mobile library within the Antrim District. The North Eastern Education and Library Board intends to establish a new library in Antrim Town Centre. This library will replace the present temporary premises in the former Methodist Church.

10.4 There are a number of youth clubs attached to schools and grant-aided by the North Eastern Education and Library Board. Antrim Borough Council encourages the development of community associations and a number of community halls have been constructed, particularly within Antrim Town.

11.1 The major responsibility for public recreation facilities within the District rests with Antrim Borough Council. In general, Antrim is well catered for as major outdoor facilities have been provided at Allen Park and both indoor and outdoor facilities have been provided at the Forum complex. In addition, a number of local facilities have been provided at Randalstown and Crumlin.

11.2 Additional land will be required for recreation purposes over the Plan period. In Antrim land has been identified at Caulside which, when developed by the Council, will more than meet the expected increase in demand. In Randalstown land has been identified at Dunmore Park.

11.3 An additional major open space resource is Lough Neagh. Shane's Castle, with its Royal Society for the Protection of Birds managed nature reserve, is an important recreation feature in the District.

Conservation (Map No 1) 12.0

12.1 Lough Neagh and Lough Beg are the most important areas for nature conservation, having numbers of rare and interesting plant and animal species together with large numbers of breeding, migrant, and wintering birds*. Both loughs are regarded as being of international importance and have been notified as Areas of Scientific Interest and declared jointly as a Ramsar site. (The 'Ramsar Convention' is an international treaty on 'Wetlands of International Importance especially Waterfowl Habitats' which was adopted at Ramsar, Iran on 2 February 1971. This convention imposes a number of specific responsibilities and obligations on the Government and was ratified by the UK Government in 1976.) Sandy Braes is also an Area of Scientific Interest. National Nature Reserves have been declared at Farr's Bay, Lough Neagh Islands, Rea's Wood and that part of Randalstown Forest along the Lough Shore. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has a managed reserve at Shane's Castle.

12.2 Within the Antrim District there are approximately 900 features of archaeological interest. Five sites are in State Care, and 36 are scheduled for protection under the Historic Monuments (Northern Ireland) Act 1971. These sites represent over 8,000 years of man's occupation of some of the richest farmland in the Province, and include a complete round tower, the Steeple, on the site of the great monastery at Antrim (founded possibly in the 6th Century AD), and the site of Muckamore Priory (founded c.1200 AD), one of the major Augustine houses of the North.

12.3 The Department designated the Riverside area in Antrim Town as a Conservation Area in 1977 under the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1972. In addition, under the same Order some 183 structures of special architectural or historic interest throughout the District have been "listed" by the Department.

* The UK Government is a signatory to European Community Directive 79/409 on the conservation of wild birds.

Agriculture and Forestry 13.0

12.4 The conservation and enhancement of the natural environment will be encouraged and promoted. Areas of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves and Nature Reserves will be protected and development likely to affect adversely such areas will not normally be permitted. Development which would adversely affect other defined areas of nature conservation importance would not normally be permitted.

12.5 The need to protect wildlife interests will be taken into account when considering development proposals in the District's towns and villages.

13.1 The main arable land of the District is in the valley of the Six Mile Water River stretching from Parkgate and Templepatrick through Dunadry to Greenmount. It is within this area that some cereal growing is practised. Milk production and beef fattening are the main enterprises on the lowland grassland farms. The hill land in the north east of the District is used primarily for livestock rearing.

13.2 Within the District agriculture is the basis of the rural economy, farms being mainly owner-occupied family units. The average farm size of about 30 hectares (74 acres) continues to increase, as small non-viable units are sold for amalgamation with larger farms. Farmers tend to specialise in one or a small number of enterprises which match their resources and expertise.

13.3 Convenient to Antrim Town are the extensive lands of Greenmount Agricultural College which is one of three Agricultural Colleges in Northern Ireland providing residential courses of agricultural education for young farmers entering the industry.

13.4 There are two main forests in the District ie Randalstown and Tardree. Randalstown Forest covers an area of 175 hectares (432 acres) bordering Lough Neagh to the south and Shane's Castle to the east. Between 1935 and 1940 the whole area was planted with conifers interspersed with groups of broadleaved trees. The forest produces about 1,000 tonnes of timber each year by a continuous cycle of thinning, felling and replanting.

13.5 Tardree Forest covers 335 hectares (827 acres) in the north of the District and lies over two mountains, Tardree (802 ft) and Carnearny (1,048 ft) with a shallow, connecting valley. It was first planted in 1929 and today the land is intensively utilized. Much of the first tree crop has been harvested and wood production has averaged 1,000-2,000 tonnes per year over the last 20 years.

Extraction of Aggregates and Minerals 14.0

INTRODUCTION

14.1 The extraction industry falls into two categories:—

- (a) the quarrying of aggregates and building stone for use in the construction industry and to a lesser extent in agriculture; and
- (b) the extraction of other minerals.

QUARRYING OF AGGREGATES AND BUILDING STONE

14.2 The production of aggregates and building stone makes an important contribution to the economy, but quarrying activities by their nature can cause significant environmental problems. Therefore in deciding quarry development applications the Department will attempt to balance the economic benefits of

the proposals with the need to minimise environmental disturbance and protect landscape quality.

14.3 Quarries should ideally avoid prominent locations and proximity to residential developments. There will be a presumption against permission being granted for new excavations which will cause a breach in a prominent skyline and where possible structures and stockpiles within working areas should be positioned below the skyline. Where planning permission is granted the Department will often seek to reduce the potential for conflict by requiring a degree of separation to be maintained between operations and other developments, particularly housing.

14.4 Permissions will normally carry conditions designed to avoid or mitigate visual disturbance and to ensure the restoration of sites to their original condition or their rehabilitation to an acceptable condition.

14.5 Where increased traffic from a proposed mineral development would prejudice the safety and convenience of road users the Department will normally refuse planning permission unless the roads can be satisfactorily improved.

14.6 Conservation issues such as the likely effects of proposals on flora, fauna, fisheries or water resources and the potential for proposals to cause aerial or water borne pollution will be taken into consideration in determining applications for mineral development. Approval will not normally be granted where mineral developments will prejudice the essential character of areas which have been declared or listed by the Department on the basis of the scientific or historic value, for example, Areas of Special Scientific Interest.

EXTRACTION OF OTHER MINERALS

14.7 Rights to most minerals, as defined by the Mineral Development Act (NI) 1969 are vested in the Department of Economic Development. That Department has the power to issue prospecting licences, mining licences or leases to exploit specific minerals. But it remains necessary for a planning consent to be issued before any mineral can be exploited. Where a consent is issued it will normally contain conditions designed to minimise environmental disturbance during the operating period and to ensure satisfactory restoration when extraction has ceased.

14.8 Within the extent of the proven reserves of any mineral deposit which is of outstanding importance and within the site of any planning consent issued in connection with the exploitation of those reserves, the Department will seek to ensure that surface development does not prejudice the exploitation of those reserves.

LIGNITE (Map No 10)

14.9 Lignite is a fossil fuel suitable for domestic and industrial use but of primary importance as a fuel for electricity generation. Prospecting licences were issued in 1978 and 1983 which led to the discovery and subsequent measurement of lignite reserves on the shore of Lough Neagh near Crumlin. These reserves are of sufficient quantity and quality to be of major importance to the Northern Ireland economy. In 1984 and 1986 planning permissions were issued for opencast mining and processing of part of the deposit.

14.10 In pursuance of its objective stated in paragraph 14.8, the Department has defined the Lignite Policy Area. In this area (the area of the proven reserves together with the extent of planning consent for the exploitation of

Public Utilities

15.0

those reserves) the Department, in exercising its development control function, will not permit any new construction except:

- (i) structures related to and necessary for established businesses within the area, including agricultural buildings where these require planning permission; and
- (ii) improvements, extensions or replacements of occupied dwellings within the area in accordance with acceptable planning criteria for such developments.

14.11 On land in close proximity to the proven reserves and approved processing plant site, planning applications will be assessed on their merits in relation to the Department's contemporary knowledge of lignite exploitation requirements. The Department will wish to ensure that neither the operations necessary to recover the lignite nor the subsequent processing of the lignite are prejudiced by new developments located where they are likely to suffer nuisance as a result of the lignite development.

SEWERAGE

15.1 Sewage treatment for Antrim Town is provided by a disposal works at Milltown and there is ample capacity here for development during the Plan period. Sewage disposal facilities in the remainder of the area are generally adequate for this period except for Crumlin. Any substantial new development in Crumlin would require the provision of additional treatment capacity. The disposal works at Muckamore is to be abandoned and the sewage pumped to the Antrim sewage system for treatment at the Milltown disposal works.

15.2 The existing sewers in the area are generally adequate for the anticipated developments, although there is a constraint on the Aldergrove system. Some enlargement of this system may be required, depending on the nature and scale of any proposed development.

15.3 Smell related problems can arise if development is sited too close to sewage disposal works. It is not possible to be precise about distances because of local variations in topography, prevailing wind, screening and disposition of existing development, but as a general rule the Department may be unable to permit new development within 90 metres of a works serving up to 300 persons, 200 metres of a works serving up to 5,000 persons, or 300 metres of a works serving more than 5,000 persons.

WATER SUPPLY

15.4 The greater part of the Antrim Borough Council area is supplied with water from two sources — Killylane Reservoir and Dunore Point (which takes water from Lough Neagh). A small area around Toome is supplied from the Glarryford Boreholes source near Ballymena. Supplies from these sources should be sufficient to meet future demands during the Plan period.

15.5 Water storage capacity for the area is not sufficient in some localities, namely Randalstown, Aldergrove and Antrim Town. New service reservoirs are included in the Water Service Capital Works Programme for these three areas.

15.6 The distribution system throughout the area is generally good and no difficulty is anticipated in providing supplies to serve new developments except in some high level rural areas.

15.7 A notifiable quantity of chlorine is stored at Dunore Point Water Treatment Works under the Notification of Installations Handling Hazardous Substances Regulations (NI) 1984. The Department, in carrying out its development control functions, consults with the Health and Safety Inspectorate on development proposals in the vicinity of the installation.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

15.8 The Antrim Area is served by five telephone exchanges, the largest of which is located in Antrim Town. A programme of modernisation has already begun with the introduction of a new digital unit at Crumlin Exchange in September 1986. This programme will continue with Antrim Exchange (scheduled for a digital unit early in 1989), followed by Toome, Randalstown and Templepatrick. Access to advanced data and telecommunications facilities will be provided on demand to meet the requirements of businesses located in the new Technology Park at Muckamore. Full national and international dialling facilities are available in the area, as is access to Prestel, the Public Viewdata Service.

ELECTRICITY

15.9 The existing high voltage system is satisfactory to deal with the majority of the expected development to the year 2001.

REFUSE DISPOSAL

15.10 The current main Refuse Tip for the District, sited at Magheralane, Randalstown, is almost exhausted. A new site has been acquired at Craigmore, Randalstown. While this site will satisfy its short term needs, Antrim Borough Council is continuing its search for sites to meet its longer term requirements. The Council also provides skip compounds in the District and is considering the development of a baling/collecting station at Newpark, Antrim.

CEMETERIES

15.11 A number of public cemeteries in the Antrim Council Area will require extension within the Plan period. Among these is the cemetery in Antrim Town where an area of 4.56 hectares (11.3 acres) to the south and east of the existing cemetery is to be acquired. The cemetery in Crumlin has adequate provision for the foreseeable future.

DRAINAGE

15.12 Storm water from within the lands zoned for development can be accommodated by the existing watercourse systems, subject to the approval of discharge points. In some cases downstream improvement works may be required in advance of significant development.

Part 3

*P***A***R*KGATE
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AREA PLAN
1984 - 2001

The Towns

POPULATION

16.1 After the designation of Antrim as a New Town, its population increased from approximately 7,500 persons in 1966 to approximately 24,000 persons by 1977. During this period there was high in-migration — an excess of people coming to the town over people leaving it. Since then, there has been relatively little growth in the population and the estimated total at August 1984 was 25,600 persons, 56% of the total District population. Due to the combination of high in-migration in these years and an associated above-average growth caused by an excess of births over deaths, the existing population is relatively young. This age characteristic of the town population is expected to continue for the foreseeable future and suggests a continued high level of natural increase. The migration effect, however, has recently reversed to net outward migration, and this is likely to have some influence on population change during the Plan period. It is estimated that Antrim's population could grow to approximately 28,200 persons by 2001, and represent 53% of the District population.

DEVELOPMENT LIMIT

16.2 A development limit has been drawn indicating the outer limit of proposed development. It also represents the inner limit of the Green Belt around the town where development will be restricted. It takes account of:—

- (i) the need to identify an adequate supply of readily available development land,
- (ii) the need to maintain a compact settlement form, and avoid unnecessary urban sprawl, and
- (iii) the need to fully utilize existing public utilities.

HOUSING

16.3 The majority of the existing housing stock in Antrim was built in the period of highest population growth during the early and mid-1970's. This growth was primarily in public authority housing and largely located to the east side of the town. By August 1984 the town had a total housing stock of approximately 7,900 dwellings, 80% of these being public sector provision, and in general relatively new.

16.4 In the Housing Chapter (see paragraphs 5.5, 5.6) it is suggested that 1,800 dwellings might be needed in Antrim Town over the Plan period. However, in view of the high growth rates and fluctuations in the population pattern in the town in the past (see paragraphs 4.3, 4.5), the residential land zoned can accommodate some 2,500 dwellings. With this necessary flexibility it is particularly important to ensure that the town grows in a compact fashion with the sites close to the town being developed first. The amount of land inside the development limit leaves too wide a choice of development sites to ensure that this happens. As a consequence two development phases for residential land have been introduced. Land to accommodate some 1,200 dwellings has been identified for first phase development ie 1984-1996. The remaining sites will only become available during the second development phase ie 1996-2001.

INDUSTRIAL LOCATIONS

16.5 It is difficult to make an accurate assessment of the amount of land which will be required for industrial use in Antrim during the Plan period. While the availability of land will not generate industrial development, it is nevertheless essential that potential development is not constrained by a lack of zoned industrial land. To this end 37 hectares (91 acres) of land are zoned for industrial use at Rathenraw and Newpark and several small parcels of land are available at the Steeple and Springfarm Industrial Estates. Some 32 hectares (80 acres) are being developed at Muckamore as Northern Ireland's first Technology Park. A proportion of these lands will be reserved solely for amenity open space in keeping with the Technology Park concept. With regard to small scale industrial uses, the Department's policy will be to react to demand as it arises rather than to apply a rigid zoning policy. Consideration will be given to appropriate industrial uses on unzoned lands provided the proposals are compatible with existing adjoining land uses or proposed land uses eg vacant factory floorspace is available at the former British Enkalon plant.

UNZONED LAND

16.6 Within the development limit there are areas of undeveloped land which have not been zoned for a particular use. Some of these areas may be physically difficult to develop while some consist of small individual parcels. The Department will consider proposals for development provided the uses are satisfactory for the locations proposed and that no physical or other problems are involved.

RECREATION FACILITIES

16.7 Antrim Borough Council intends to develop land between Greystone estate and Ballycraigy estate as a town park. The town's main recreational open space is situated at the Forum complex and Allen Park, but, because Allen Park is somewhat divorced from the main housing areas, the Council is examining the possibility of locating new recreation facilities in the east of the town. Land at Caulside would be suitable for such a use and would meet the expected increase in demand for such facilities over the Plan period. Within the housing estates the Department will encourage the use of existing under-utilised spaces as kickabouts, informal football pitches etc; in order to overcome the existing shortfall in this type of facility.

CONSERVATION

16.8 Riverside, a linear 18th/19th century mill settlement on the east bank of the Six Mile Water, was designated a "Conservation Area" on 30 September 1977 and contains nine properties listed as of special architectural or historic interest. Its irregular terraces of houses are being renovated with grants from the Department of the Environment (NI) and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive under a Private Investment Priority Area Scheme. A revision of the Design Guide is underway.

16.9 In the rest of the town centre there are some 40 listed properties with focal buildings along the axis of the main street at Market Square, at the entrance to Riverside, and near the junction of Church Street and Castle Way. The rest of the town contains some 30 properties listed as of interest, mostly scattered, but with a nucleus at Muckamore.

THE CENTRAL AREA (Map No 4)

16.10 The Department discussed the future of Antrim Town Centre with Antrim Borough Council, Antrim Chamber of Trade and other interested parties.

16.11 In Antrim the Old Town Core is under-utilised and removed from the main car park which immediately adjoins the new Castle Centre. The Town Centre is at the extreme western edge of the town and is bounded tightly on the west by an important main road (Dublin Road). This road cuts the Town Centre off from the Castle Grounds (a valuable amenity feature).

16.12 The Department proposes:—

1. The formation of a pedestrian priority area at Market Square/Lower High Street.

This will involve the laying of a new designed street surface, provision of street furniture and landscaping, and the introduction of a vehicular traffic limitation scheme. Details of the scheme, which will include the type, number and frequency of vehicles entering the Priority Area, will emerge only after discussions with all interested parties, and will change from time to time in the light of local circumstances and continuing discussion. Vehicular circulation movements will be studied and amendments made, to resolve the existing unsatisfactory position in Market Square/Lower High Street. One possible solution may be the introduction of a one way vehicular circulation system through the Pedestrian Priority Area.

2. The re-vitalization of the "Old" Town Core ie Market Square/High Street

Among proposals the Department would consider under this heading are:-

- (a) The transfer of the market to Market Square.
- (b) Infill retail development on the Spinning Mill site.
- (c) An extension to the Castle Way car park in the Lower Castle Street area.
- (d) The provision of a footpath on the west side of the Spinning Mill site continuing via a footbridge to the south side of the river.

3. The general environmental improvement of the Central Area, including the river, car parks, vacant sites, derelict and run-down buildings.

The following proposals would contribute to environmental improvement:-

- (a) Re-development of the site at 1-19 Church Street, to include a footpath link from the Railway Street car park to Church Street.
- (b) Development of the library site on the east side of Railway Street, to include a footpath link from the Railway Street car park to Church Street.

- (c) Improvements to the Castle Way car park and north side of the Castle Centre.
- (d) Retention of the section of the old Castle wall opposite Market Square.
- (e) Landscaping of the open space on the north side of the river between the Spinning Mill site and Castle Grounds.
- (f) Improving the existing path and open space on the south side of the river.

4. The linking of the Town Centre to Castle Grounds to ensure the optimum utilization of a valuable open space amenity feature.

This will be assisted by Antrim Borough Council's proposal to locate a Civic Centre on the "Castle Site" in Castle Grounds.

16.13 There are three sectors outside the Town Core in the Central Area:—

- (i) Upper Church Street/Lower Fountain Street;
- (ii) Castle Street north of Castle Way, and
- (iii) Massereene, Dublin Road, Lough Road and Massereene Street.

Apart from Massereene Street, which should retain its residential character, commercial/office proposals will be considered on their Planning merits in these "mixed use" sectors.

16.14 It is the Department's policy to consolidate the Central Area as the main shopping focus in Antrim. As a result major shopping developments outside the Central Area will be resisted as being inconsistent with this policy. The Department is aware, however, that "roof-rack" type uses cannot be easily accommodated in an established town centre. If it can be clearly demonstrated to the Department, therefore, that sites suitable for these uses are not available in the Central Area, consideration will be given to locating them on unzoned land within the development limit.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

16.15 Antrim Town has six Controlled Primary Schools and two Maintained Primary Schools in addition to three Controlled Secondary Schools and one Maintained Secondary School, one Controlled Grammar School and a new Technical College.

16.16 A new central library, which will replace the existing premises in Church Street, is to be constructed in Railway Street. The other library in Antrim is situated at Greystone Neighbourhood Centre and there are no plans at present (other than the town centre project) to further develop the Library Service.

16.17 Suburban shopping in Antrim is catered for by three neighbourhood centres and by local corner shops. Neighbourhood centres are discussed in Paragraph 16.27. In relation to corner shops, the Department's policy will be to help consolidate their role, as they are quite well located throughout the estates and provide a much needed local service. In future developments the Department will normally encourage the construction of dual-purpose units which can be used either as dwellings or shops, depending on local demand.

16.18 The main development in relation to health facilities in the Antrim Area is the proposal to provide by 1992 a new Area Hospital off Bush Road, containing 313 beds. On the same complex, the Northern Area College of Nursing opened in 1983 and the residential accommodation for trainee nurses has been occupied since September 1985. Final planning of an Area Laboratory on the site has been delayed pending the outcome of a Board Working Party on laboratory services for the whole of the Area. With this exception, no major new sites are likely to be required for health facilities within the Plan period.

ROAD PROPOSALS

16.19 There are no large-scale road proposals programmed for Antrim Town during the Plan period. Several schemes are planned:—

- (i) improvements to the Ballymena Road from the Oriel Road junction to Dunsilly roundabout;
- (ii) slip roads from the M2 motorway to the Antrim Area Hospital site.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

16.20 **Sewerage** — Sewerage treatment from Antrim Town is provided by a disposal works at Milltown and there is ample capacity for development to the end of the Plan period.

16.21 **Water Supply** — Antrim's water supply comes from Dunore Point which takes water from Lough Neagh. This distribution system is good and no difficulty is anticipated in providing supplies to serve new developments.

16.22 **Telecommunications** — Antrim Town is served by the largest of five electronic telephone exchanges in the District. Full Subscriber Trunk Dialling (STD) and International Direct Dialling (IDD) facilities are available, as is access to Prestel, the Public Viewdata Service. Digital modernisation of the exchange is planned for early 1989.

16.23 **Electricity** — The existing high voltage system is satisfactory to deal with the development areas in the town.

16.24 Refuse Disposal — A site at Craigmore, Randalstown has been acquired to provide refuse disposal facilities for the town and District.

16.25 Cemeteries — An area of 4.56 hectares (11.3 acres) to the south and east of the existing cemetery at Moylena Road is to be acquired for an extension to this facility.

BELMONT

16.26 The Belmont area covers some 5.5 hectares (13.6 acres) of land to the south east of the Town Centre. Present land uses include Northern Ireland Housing Executive prefab housing, the site of a former football pitch and adjoining under-utilised lands. The Department's policy will involve the area being comprehensively planned with the provision of better access facilities and the incorporation of a number of compatible land uses such as housing and open space.

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES

16.27 Neighbourhood Centres are located at Ballycraigy, Greystone and Parkhall. Generally these centres act as the focal point of their neighbourhood providing service shops such as hairdressers, sub post offices, newsagents and general grocers. The number of vacant properties and the relatively high turnover of tenants indicate that the once foreseen demand for these shop units no longer exists and they have become rather dull and unattractive. It is the Department's policy to give sympathetic consideration to compatible alternative uses such as light industrial workshops or community based uses in these neighbourhood centres.

Randalstown
(Map No 5)
17.0

17.1 Introduction Randalstown is the larger of the two local towns within the Antrim District. It straddles the River Main and is approximately four miles west of Antrim Town. Its primary function as a local service centre, acting as the shopping, educational and employment centre for its local hinterland will continue, although its dependence on Antrim Town as the major shopping and employment centre of the District will continue to grow.

17.2 Population The 1984 population of 3,500 persons is expected to grow to 4,300 persons by the year 2001. The allocation of land for differing uses within the Plan period is related to this scale of growth.

17.3 Development Limit Limits to the future development of Randalstown have been defined following an evaluation of the physical constraints to the town's development, and consideration of the infrastructure capacity.

17.4 Housing Major housing development in recent years has located to the west of the River Main, and the location of new housing areas has been designated to consolidate and round off the existing town. Approximately 44.5 hectares (110 acres) of land have been identified to cater for the estimated housing need. This takes account of the need to allow for choice of sites and for lands not becoming immediately available for development.

17.5 In addition to the redevelopment of the "Old Bleach" site for housing, land has been identified at Magheralane Road/Craigstown Road, Railway Road/Castle Road, Old Staffordstown Road, Moneynick Road, and Church Road/Portglenone Road.

17.6 Industry Land suitable for industrial development, amounting to some 0.8 hectares (1.9 acres), has been zoned. Consideration will also be given to proposals for appropriate industrial uses on development lands (zoned and unzoned) within the town, provided the proposals are compatible with existing adjoining land uses or proposed land uses.

17.7 Unzoned Land Within the development limit there are areas of undeveloped land which have not been zoned for a particular use. Some of these areas may be physically difficult to develop while some consist of small individual parcels. Development will be permitted on this unzoned land provided the uses are satisfactory for the locations proposed and that no physical or other problems are involved.

17.8 Open Space The bulk of the existing recreational open space in Randalstown is located between Neillsbrook Road and the River Main. Additional recreational open space will be required within the Plan period. Playing fields will be developed to the west of Grant Avenue, and Dunmore Park can be developed as an amenity and recreational open space area with access from New Street via the "old cinema" site. A strip of land along the eastern bank of the River Main will be safeguarded to provide a riverside walk. In the longer term pedestrian bridges could be constructed over the River Main close to the Health Centre and at the weir.

17.9 Town Centre A town centre area has been defined. Planning policy will be to encourage shopping, commercial and entertainment/recreation uses here and to discourage such developments elsewhere in the town.

17.10 Health and Education No new sites are likely to be required for health or education facilities within the Plan period.

Crumlin
(Map No 6)
18.0

18.1 Introduction Crumlin is the second local town in the Antrim District. The town is located some 14 miles from Belfast and eight miles from Antrim and is well serviced in terms of public transport, having both a bus depot and a train station, resulting in good access to Belfast and Antrim. It is still very much a market town as evidenced by the operation of a livestock market three times per week, and exists as a service centre for the rural hinterland. The town has developed to the south of the Crumlin River Valley and westwards from the railway station.

18.2 Population The population is expected to grow from a total of 2,400 persons in 1984 to 3,800 persons in 2001. The allocation of land for differing uses within the Plan period is related to this scale of growth.

18.3 Development Limit and Housing A development limit has been drawn around the town to include sufficient land for development over the Plan period, and to take account of physical and infrastructural constraints. Some 45 hectares (111 acres) of land have been identified for development. This is sufficient to allow for the expected housing needs over the Plan period and to give a degree of flexibility in choice of sites. The proposed road linking the new housing areas between Cidercourt Road and Lurgan Road will be provided by the developers when development takes place.

18.4 Industry Consideration will be given to proposals for appropriate industrial uses on development lands (zoned and unzoned) within the town provided the proposals are compatible with existing adjoining land uses or proposed land uses.

18.5 Unzoned Land Within the development limit there are areas of undeveloped land which have not been zoned for a particular use. Some of these areas may be physically difficult to develop while some consist of small individual parcels. Development will be permitted on this unzoned land provided the uses are satisfactory for the locations proposed and that no physical or other problems are involved.

18.6 Open Space Existing recreational open space is provided at War Memorial Park. The Council would intend to provide further open space facilities to meet any increase in demand over the Plan period. The Crumlin River Valley is a most attractive area where development control will be exercised with special care. The Department of Agriculture is constructing a car park with picnic and toilet facilities at Crumlin Bridge within the valley.

18.7 Town Centre A town centre area has been defined in Crumlin within which Planning policy will be to encourage shopping, commercial and entertainment/recreation uses. Conversely such developments will be discouraged elsewhere in the town.

18.8 Health and Education No new sites for health or education facilities are likely to be required within the Plan period.

18.9 Sewage Works The existing sewage works, with a capacity for 2,700 population, is presently working just below full capacity. In view of the expected growth in Crumlin, and as the existing site would not be suitable for extension, a new sewage treatment works will be required. Alternative locations will be examined to earmark a site for a larger facility.

18.10 Due to its proximity to the existing sewage disposal works no development can be permitted on that part of the 5.3 hectare (13.2 acre) field to the west of the existing sewage disposal works which lies within a 100 metre radius of the works as measured from the centre of the 2 filter beds. Any planning applications will be required to include a layout for the whole field to enable the complete site to be developed when the existing sewage disposal works is replaced.

Part 4

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AREA PLAN

1984 - 2001

The Villages

Introduction

19.0

19.1 Templepatrick, Toome and Parkgate have been identified as settlements suitable for further limited growth. They function as local service centres as well as providing suitable locations for residential development.

19.2 Templepatrick and Parkgate are situated in the Six Mile Water Valley, within the Belfast Urban Area Green Belt and convenient to junction number five of the M2. In such a prime commuter location close to Belfast it is desirable to prevent development taking place to the extent of swamping these villages by extensive suburban building. The village map simply indicates a development limit based on an evaluation of the physical characteristics of the settlement and the availability of essential services. In this way it is felt that the villages can expand to an acceptable extent without prejudicing the existing character or form of the settlements.

19.3 Within the "defined limit" development proposals will be accorded a measure of flexibility. Applications will be decided on general planning principles bearing in mind the need to integrate new development with the existing form of the village and the need to make maximum use of existing public utilities.

Templepatrick 20.0

20.1 Introduction The village of Templepatrick lies approximately five miles east of Antrim and is a small service centre and commuter settlement. It had a population of just over 1,000 at August 1984. Templepatrick is surrounded by the Belfast Urban Area Green Belt.

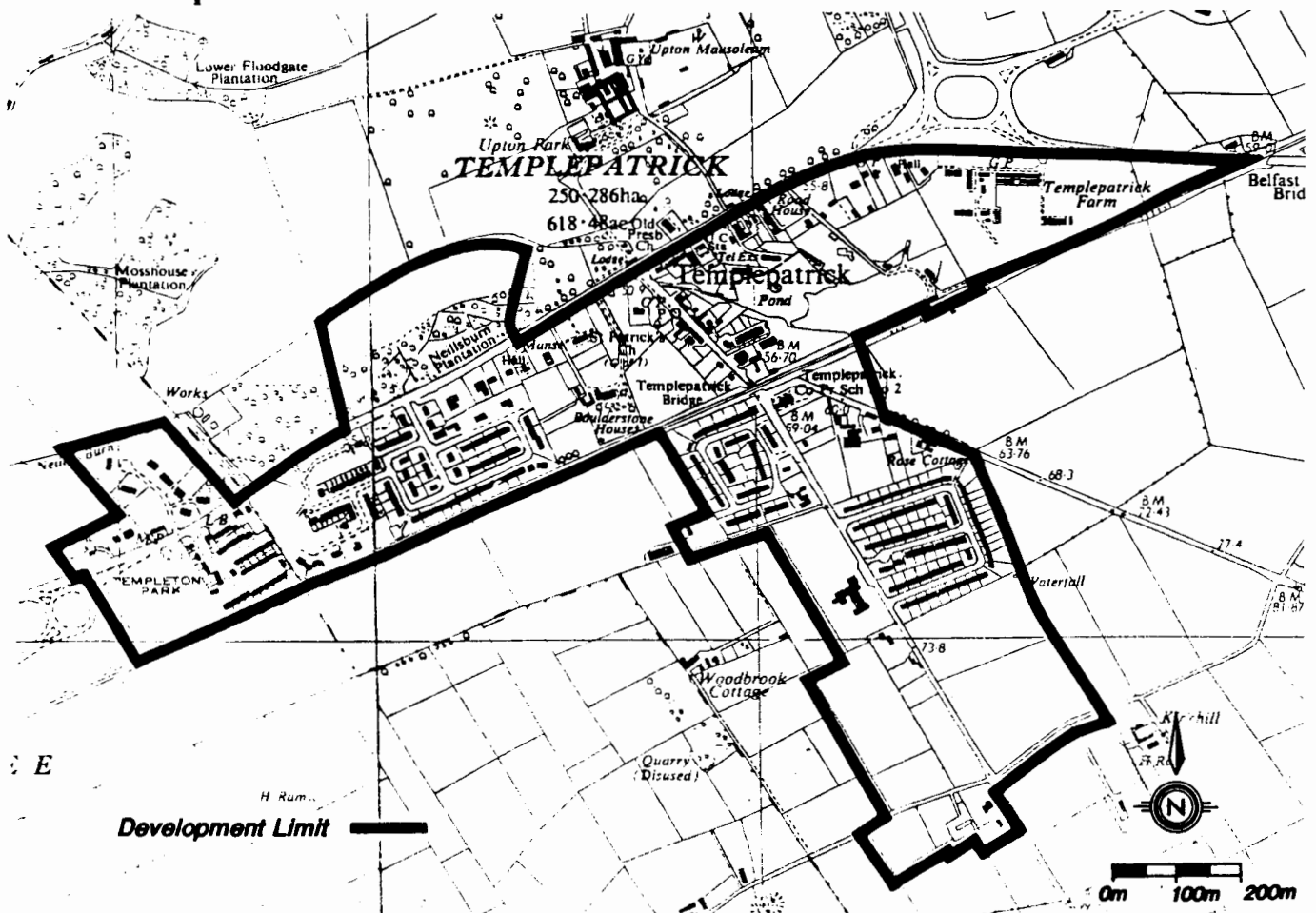
20.2 Due to the amenity and physical characteristics of the settlement, the Department does not favour a substantial expansion of Templepatrick.

20.3 Development Limit In determining the limits to development of Templepatrick, the following physical considerations were taken into account in addition to the availability of essential services:—

- (i) The two roundabouts.
- (ii) The main traffic route (A6) — the main Belfast/Airport Road.
- (iii) The railway line.
- (iv) Upton Park — a valuable amenity feature.
- (v) High ground on the north side of Coach Road.

Most of the additional land will be provided on Lylehill Road to the south east of Templepatrick Primary School and Temple Rise housing development. The Kilmakee Road forms a suitable limit of development for the village on its south side.

Map No 7



20.4 Open Space Land suitable for open space development is sited to the rear of Templepatrick Primary School on the west side of Lylehill Road.

20.5 Sewage Works The existing sewage works, on the north side of Belfast Road, has sufficient capacity to cater for the expected expansion of Templepatrick during the Plan period.

Toome 21.0

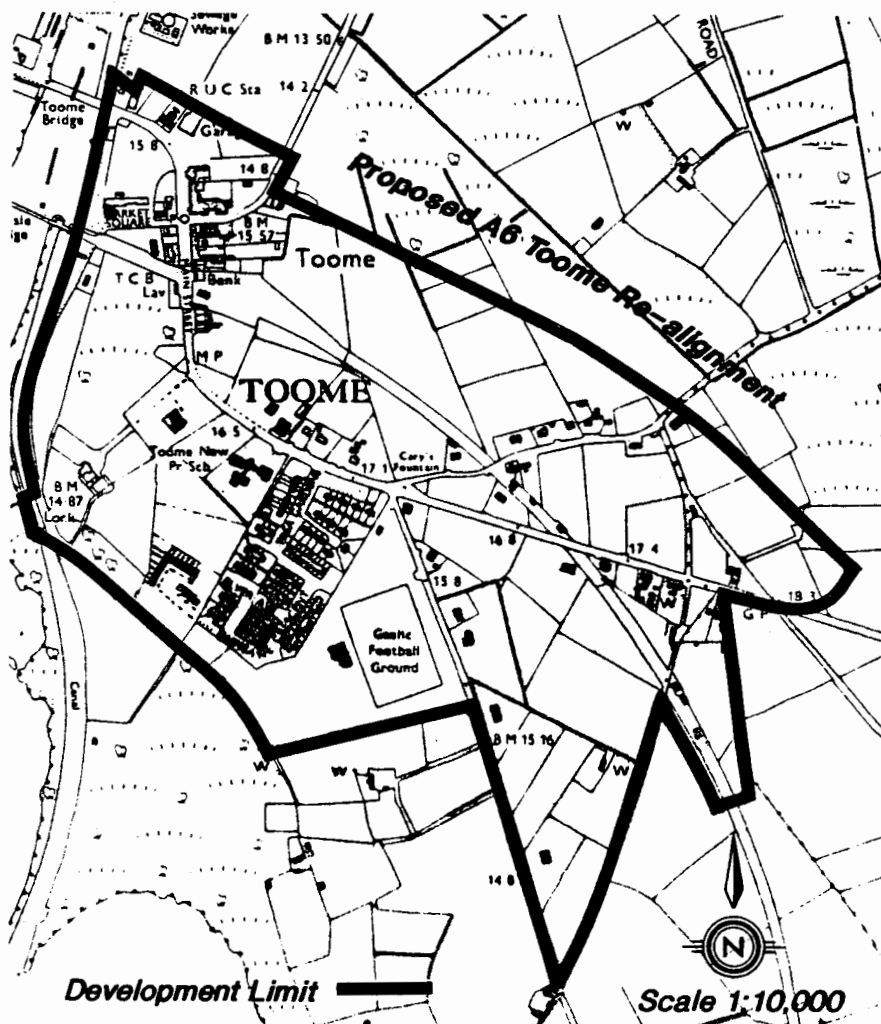
Map No 8

21.1 Introduction The village of Toome is located some 12 miles from Antrim at the extreme western boundary of the Borough Council Area. It is situated at a traditional crossing point of the River Bann where it meets Lough Neagh and occupies flat low lying land. A small service centre, it had a population of approximately 800 at August 1984.

21.2 Development Limit In determining the limits of development of Toome, the following physical considerations were taken into account in addition to the availability of essential services:—

- (i) Lough Neagh and the River Bann.
- (ii) The proposed Toome by-pass.

A large part of the additional land required will be provided between the new by-pass and the Moneynick Road with further sites to the east of the Shore Road. The limit has been drawn to take account of the trend for individual rather than groups of private houses and also to prevent ribboning to the south along Shore Road. The development limit caters for the expected growth of Toome and subsequently development applications just outside this limit would normally be refused.



21.3 Much of the development land in Toome is of flat low lying nature and development levels over extensive areas will need to be raised accordingly.

21.4 Open Space There are a number of formal and informal open space areas existing and ample land exists to extend these if required.

21.5 Sewage Works The existing sewage works, on the river bank to the north of Main Street, has sufficient capacity to cater for the expected expansion of Toome during the Plan period.

Parkgate 22.0

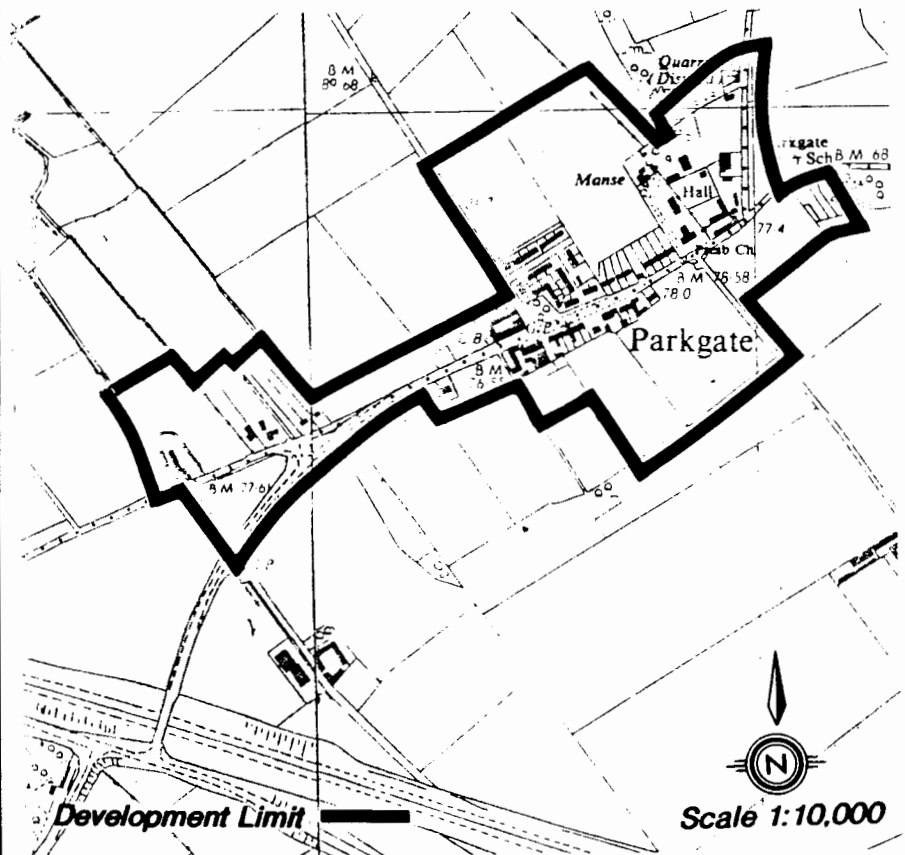
22.1 Introduction Parkgate is a small linear village located in an area of high quality agricultural land approximately six miles to the east of Antrim Town. The village has changed little in recent history and had a relatively small population in the region of 250 at August 1984. Parkgate is surrounded by the Belfast Urban Area Green Belt.

22.2 Development Limit In determining the limits to development of Parkgate the following physical considerations were taken into account in addition to the availability of essential services:—

- (i) The nature of the terrain.
- (ii) The Grange Road.
- (iii) The sewage works.

The amount of additional development land has been limited to avoid altering the existing village character whilst providing sufficient sites to give flexibility and choice.

Map No 9



22.3 Sewage Works The existing sewage works, to the south west of the village, has sufficient capacity to cater for the expected expansion of Parkgate during the Plan period.

Part 5

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AREA PLAN

1984 - 2001

The Rural Area

INTRODUCTION

23.1 The Antrim District contains very attractive and contrasting countryside ranging from the Lough Neagh and Lough Beg shorelines, through the Main, Six Mile Water and Crumlin River valleys, to the high ground north east of Antrim Town and the Belfast Hills in the south east. In addition to the development pressures associated with the several towns and villages in the District and the International Airport, the rural area comes under severe pressure because of its proximity, and easy access, to Belfast. The Antrim countryside is a very convenient location for the commuter who works in Belfast but prefers to live in a quiet rural setting.

23.2 Some 500 applications for planning permission to develop single dwellings in the Antrim countryside were received by the Department in the five year period from January 1974 to December 1978 (100 applications/year). This figure rose to 790 applications in the period January 1979/December 1983 (158 applications/year). In 1984 some 217 such applications were received and in 1985, 242 applications. Clearly the countryside is under increasing pressure to accommodate very substantial scattered residential development and requires the protection of a policy designed to retain its inherent attractions.

PLANNING CRITERIA

23.3 While highlighting certain types of area in need of stronger protection than the remainder of the District, the Department will have regard to the following criteria when dealing with all planning applications in the rural area:—

- (i) the amenity of the countryside;
- (ii) the traffic hazards caused by development adjacent to, and additional access onto, public roads;
- (iii) the undesirable effects of ribbon development and urban sprawl;
- (iv) the economies of providing services for urban development as compared with scattered rural development, eg water supply, sewerage, electricity, telephones, refuse disposal;
- (v) the possible danger to public health caused by the pollution of water-courses as a result of the approval of an excessive number of septic tanks;
- (vi) the convenience of social facilities — schools, libraries, doctors, clinics, etc — and the additional public expenditure incurred in generally servicing a scattered rural community;
- (vii) safeguarding of restricted zones such as airfields, mineral deposits and water catchment areas;
- (viii) the need to protect the wildlife interest of the countryside, in ASSIs in particular.

GREEN BELTS and RURAL POLICY AREAS

23.4 Within the Antrim District the Department considers that certain parts of the rural area require stronger protection than others. As a result Green Belts and Policy Areas have been identified and a more protective policy operates within them.

23.5 Green Belts have been drawn around the three larger settlements, ie Antrim, Randalstown and Crumlin. Here the more protective policy is required to prevent ribbon development and urban sprawl, and to provide a clear break between town and country. In addition a sizeable area in the east of the District is inside the Belfast Urban Area Green Belt. Due to its close proximity to Belfast this is an area attractive to commuters, and added protection is required because of the pressure for development.

23.6 Three Policy Areas have been drawn in areas of high scenic value where added protection is required for amenity reasons, and in the case of Ballybracken, because of pressure for development:—

- (i) **The Lough Shore Policy Area** protects the Lough Neagh and Lough Beg shorelines. It extends 100 metres east of the shore road and 200 metres from the shoreline where there is no road;
- (ii) **The Tardree Policy Area** protects the forested high land north of Antrim. As well as being a commercial forest this area is important in visual amenity terms and is used for recreational purposes;
- (iii) **The Ballybracken Policy Area** is an attractive upland area where there has been considerable pressure for development in recent years. It has been drawn to protect the Ballybracken Road, Old Ballybracken Road and surrounding elevated land.

23.7 **Road Frontage Policy Areas**, which are outside the Green Belts, protect the District's main roads and certain other roads under the pressure of scattered road frontage and ribbon development. They are the A6, A26, A52, B18, B39, B52, B59, B101, C24, C25, C26, C43. The Policy Area extends for 100 metres on each side of the road. In addition the M2, M22, A6, A26, A52, A57 and B101 have been designated as "main routes for protection" by the Department. Access to the M2 and M22 will not be permitted and access to the other routes is strictly controlled to preserve the safety and convenience of traffic using these roads. (See paragraph 23.19).

23.8 **The Lignite Policy Area** is required to protect the regionally significant lignite deposits south west of Crumlin. Planning control inside the Lignite Policy Area is outlined in Chapter 14.

CONTROL OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN GREEN BELTS AND RURAL POLICY AREAS

23.9 Planning permission will not normally be given for groups of dwellings within a Green Belt or Policy Area and permission for a single dwelling will normally be granted only where the Department considers that an applicant has proved a need to live there due to employment considerations or other special personal circumstances.

23.10 **Employment Considerations (agriculturally related)** Permission will normally be granted for a dwelling for a farmer engaged in full-time agricultural operations. Sympathetic consideration will be given to part-time farmers and farm workers where the extent of their agricultural operations warrants the erection of a new dwelling. Also, applications by retiring farmers or their spouses for planning permission to erect dwellings for their own occupation on the land which they farm will receive sympathetic consideration.

23.11 Employment Considerations (non-agricultural) Sympathetic consideration will be given to a planning application for a dwelling for occupation by a person engaged in the whole-time management of a commercial or industrial undertaking provided it can be shown to be necessary for the person to live in a rural area close to the undertaking. A person who must of necessity live in a particular area because of the nature of his employment, eg a forestry worker, will similarly be given sympathetic consideration.

23.12 Special Personal Circumstances The Department may give sympathetic consideration to applicants who because of special personal or domestic circumstances require to live at a particular location in the rural area. It is not possible to state clearly the different circumstances which would be regarded as justifying the granting of permission. However, it will be necessary for the Department to be satisfied that the circumstances are specific to the application site and that hardship would be caused if planning permission were refused.

23.13 Where a permission is granted for employment or special personal circumstances a condition relating to the occupancy of the proposed dwelling will normally be attached.

23.14 Permission to build a dwelling in a Green Belt or Policy Area may be given on a suitable infill site where a substantial and closely built-up frontage of development already exists, and where the dwelling is satisfactory in all other respects.

23.15 Permission may also be given to renovate, rebuild or replace an existing dwelling provided such building exhibits the essential characteristics of a dwelling. The replacement dwelling shall have form and dimensions similar to the existing building and be sited on or close to the dwelling being replaced.

23.16 Planning permission will also depend on suitable location, siting and design (see paragraphs 23.24 — 23.27) and will not as a general rule be forthcoming in respects of applications which do not meet the criteria listed in paragraph 23.3.

CONTROL OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE OUTSIDE GREEN BELTS AND RURAL POLICY AREAS

23.17 In the rest of the rural area the Department's policy distinguishes between single dwellings and groups of dwellings. The latter will not normally be approved in the open countryside although some opportunities for a limited number of dwellings may exist in established clusters of development (paragraph 24.1).

23.18 Where it is proposed to construct a single dwelling (or renovate or replace an existing one) it will not be necessary for an applicant to show a need to live in the countryside. Planning permission will depend on suitable location, siting and design (see paragraphs 23.24 — 23.27), and will ensure that the development does not lead to an undesirable change in the character of its rural setting. Planning permission will not as a general rule be forthcoming in respect of applications which do not meet the criteria listed in paragraph 23.3.

ACCESS TO RURAL ROADS

23.19 In addition to the above the Department will safeguard a network of main traffic routes throughout the rural area, namely the M2, M22, A6, A26, A52, A57 and B101. On the M2 and M22 no access of any kind will be permitted. On the remaining main traffic routes new accesses or the intensification of use of existing accesses will be strictly controlled. Where an access is to serve the following types of development approval may be given unless use of the access would cause an unacceptable traffic hazard:—

- (i) farm dwelling — where a dwelling is required for the working of a farm and access to the proposed site can only be obtained from a main traffic route;
- (ii) dwelling serving an existing commercial undertaking — where a dwelling is required for the working of an existing commercial undertaking and access to the proposed site can only be obtained from a main traffic route;
- (iii) replacement dwelling — where a building to be replaced has been in regular use in recent years. In this case a condition requiring the improvement of the access may be imposed.
- (iv) there may occasionally be other cases which justify exceptional circumstances but these should be rare and will be assessed on their merits.

23.20 Applications to construct new accesses on to all other roads will be treated on their merits. Standards of sight lines, radii and gradients will vary according to the configuration of the road and the road classification. The number of accesses on a given stretch of road will be relevant as will their proximity to junctions. Sight line requirements will be applied but the Department will seek to retain hedgerows and trees as far as possible.

CONTROL OF NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

23.21 Planning permission for non-residential development will be considered on the basis of the guidelines set down below and, where more unusual developments are proposed outside these guidelines, the circumstances of the particular case. In general the Department will need to be satisfied that the development cannot be sited equally well in an urban area. Planning permission will depend on suitable location, siting, design and the criteria set out in paragraph 23.3 above. The Department will adopt a stricter control policy in Green Belts, Policy Areas, and adjoining main roads than elsewhere in the remainder of the rural area.

23.22 While the Department will encourage industry to locate mainly in urban areas, sympathetic consideration will be given to the following:—

- (i) Agriculturally-related industry where circumstances dictate its location on the site proposed in the open countryside;
- (ii) Small projects, normally associated with a local resident already living on the site. In these cases there would likely be a strict limitation on further extensions to the project in such a rural location;
- (iii) Mineral workings which by their nature are almost invariably located in the open countryside. When planning permission is granted for such development, the consent will normally be subject to conditions designed to minimise environmental disturbance during the operating period and to ensure satisfactory restoration when extraction has ceased.

23.23 The Department's policies regarding the location of other non-residential developments in the rural area are outlined below:—

- (i) **Retailing and Commercial Activity.** This type of development will be strongly resisted in the open countryside as these uses are better located within existing built-up areas, both to serve the local community and to conserve landscape;
- (ii) **Agricultural Buildings.** Those which require planning permission will be subject to the same siting, design and other planning criteria being applied to development in the countryside;
- (iii) **Community and Other Uses.** Normally community uses should be provided in existing settlements, but it is recognised that exceptionally there may be a need for such buildings in a rural area. Nursing and residential homes are considered under this category.
- (iv) **Recreation and Tourism.** Sympathetic consideration will be given to projects designed to cater for outdoor recreational activities or to facilitate the tourist industry. Planning applications for hotels and guest houses will be treated on their merits.
- (v) **Waste Disposal.** In the rural area particular regard will be paid to the location of landfill sites for waste and facilities associated with them. Vehicle or scrap metal dumps cause particular visual problems and it is unlikely that they would be approved in the rural area. The only possible exception may be in a well screened derelict quarry.

LOCATION, SITING AND DESIGN

23.24 The amenity of the countryside is set down as the first planning criterion in paragraph 23.3. The Department will attach great importance to the detailed consideration of the location and siting of buildings in the landscape, their design, and the carrying out of any ancillary works.

23.25 **Location.** A satisfactory location will depend primarily on the number of single dwellings capable of being absorbed into the particular rural setting proposed. The planning circumstances appropriate for consideration in any particular location will change as individual dwellings are approved from time to time in the locality. The nature of the existing landscape will be important. Broad expanses of open, flat or gently undulating terrain with few trees or large hedges can absorb fewer dwellings than the varied topography of drumlin country, and where the landscape is interspersed with many trees and hedges. The amount of existing development will be crucial. The build up of ribbon development along the roads and the general "spotting" of dwellings over the landscape must be prevented. On the other hand, new buildings may often be integrated into existing clusters of development without significant detriment to visual amenity.

23.26 **Siting and Design.** The aim will be to dovetail new buildings into their setting to ensure that they are properly integrated within the existing scene. Developments on hilltops, on ridges and on the skyline, should be avoided. Where possible buildings should be positioned close to existing trees and substantial hedges. Where siting is satisfactory, the mass or sheer size of the building will be important — generally the smaller the better. The shape and scale of the building, its orientation and the height at which it is set relative to its surroundings, must all be taken into account. Fenestration, type and colour of materials used will be considered — the number of different materials should be limited.

**Hamlets
(Map No 10)
24.0**

23.27 The treatment of the immediate surroundings of a building or dwelling is important. In this connection the Department will look for the minimum felling of hedges and hedgerow trees, when considering the visibility requirements needed to access sites. Prominent and dominating access roads, gate pillars and boundary walls or fences, however appropriate in suburban avenues, can be quite out of place in the countryside.

24.1 In accordance with its Rural Planning Policy the Department will not normally look favourably on proposals for groups of houses in the countryside. Outside the Green Belts and Policy Areas the Department's policy is to grant planning permission for single dwellings in the countryside provided the location, siting and design are acceptable and that no objection arises from the application of planning criteria. In these areas hamlets (small communities consisting of several households and some service facilities eg shop, pub, church) are likely to provide opportunities for the development of single dwellings and small groups of dwellings by the infilling of vacant sites and the rounding off of existing development.

24.2 Inside the Green Belts planning permission for single dwellings is normally given only to those who need to live in the countryside. Hamlets inside the Green Belts provide locations where a limited number of dwellings can be approved. Such development should be compatible with the size, form and character of the particular hamlet and the facilities it possesses. Three Green Belt hamlets have been identified ie Dunadry, Groggan and Milltown (Randalstown).

24.3 Development limits have not been identified for the hamlets.

**Nutts Corner
25.0**

25.1 This is essentially a rural area isolated from the nearest town or village.

25.2 The area is not suitable for industrial/commercial activities since Water Service have indicated that they could only supply limited quantities of water, insufficient for the needs of industrial processing.

25.3 Further, any substantial development of this area would add to the danger and inconvenience of traffic in the vicinity of this important roundabout.

25.4 It is the Department's policy to encourage large scale commercial and industrial uses to locate within the District Town, in this case Antrim, where there is a readily available supply of fully serviced sites. Suitable small scale industrial uses will be welcome in appropriate sites in other settlements.

25.5 Permission will normally be given for small scale commercial and industrial activities in existing buildings such as disused agricultural or commercial buildings or on derelict sites provided there are no objections such as unsightliness, noise, smell and excessive or dangerous traffic generation.

References

1. *Regional Physical Development Strategy 1975-1995, H.M.S.O. 1977.*
2. *"The Free Zone (Belfast Airport) Designation Order 1984" Statutory Instrument 1984 No 1206.*

PARKGATE
RANDALSTOWN
ANTRIM
TEMPLEPATRICK
CRUMLIN
TOOME
AREA PLAN
1984-2001



***Department of the Environment
for Northern Ireland***

***Town & Country Planning Service
County Hall
182 Galgorm Road
Ballymena BT42 1QF***

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